

ELGAR'S SECOND SYMPHONY FINEST RECORDING OF A ONCE-NEGLECTED MASTERPIECE

GRAMOPHONE

The world's best classical music reviews

Est 1923 · SEPTEMBER 2011

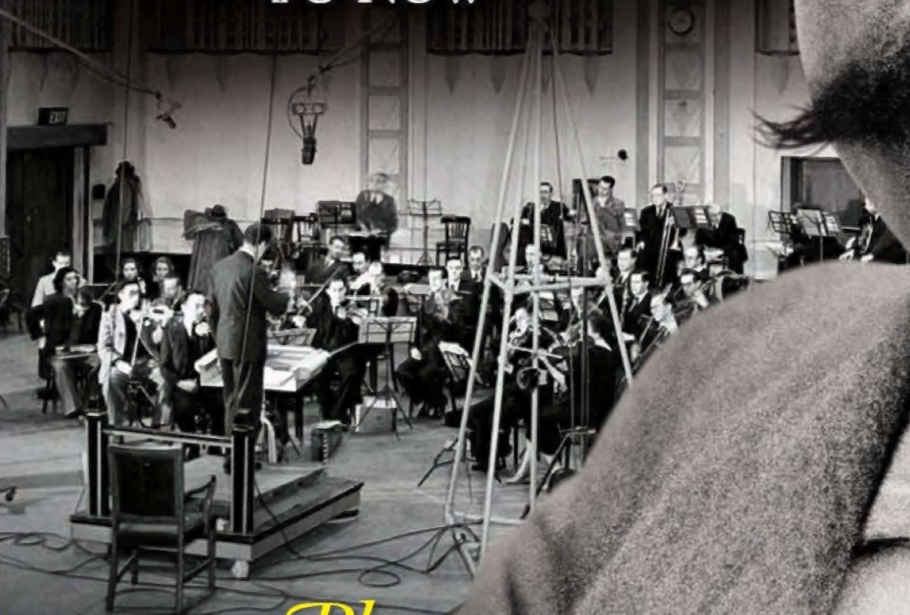
80TH ANNIVERSARY

THE COMPLETE CLASSICAL HISTORY OF ABBEY ROAD

FROM

ELGAR

TO NOW



Plus

ABBEY ROAD IN PICTURES

UNSEEN PHOTOGRAPHS,
REVEALING SHOTS



~
THE ABBEY ROAD PLAYLIST
CHOSEN BY STUDIO INSIDERS



140+
RECORDINGS
REVIEWED

AND HEAR THE BEST
OF THEM ONLINE
gramophone.co.uk

BACH,
BEETHOVEN
...NIELSEN

*The newest composer
to join the greats*



www.gramophone.co.uk
UK £4.60

August highlights

from EMI and Virgin Classics



That's Entertainment

The John Wilson Orchestra, John Wilson

World renowned conductor and arranger John Wilson leads an all-star cast of singers and his eponymous orchestra, comprised of some of the UK's finest musicians, on this dazzling recording of some of the best-loved songs from Hollywood's Golden Age. Most of the scores have been lovingly and painstakingly reconstructed by Wilson, as MGM destroyed the originals in 1969. This is the first time the songs, including *Singin' in the Rain*, *Steppin' Out with My Baby*, *The Trolley Song*, and title track *That's Entertainment*, have been recorded in their intended orchestration since the films' original soundtrack recordings. *That's Entertainment*, featuring Kim Criswell, Matthew Ford, Sarah Fox, Seth MacFarlane and Curtis Stigers, will be available in luxury, standard and digital packaging from 29th August.



Schoenberg: Orchestral Works

Berliner Philharmoniker, Simon Rattle

Following the release of the complete Brahms symphonies, Sir Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker have performed and recorded a programme of orchestral works by Arnold Schoenberg, who was a great admirer of Brahms. The repertoire, recorded in concert at Berlin's Philharmonie in late October/early November 2009, consists of Schoenberg's orchestration of Brahms's *Piano Quartet in G minor*, *Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene* (Accompanying Music to a Film) and the full orchestra version of the *Chamber Symphony No. 1*. Schoenberg: Orchestral Works will be released on CD and digital download on 8th August.

"Altogether a marvellous achievement"

The Daily Telegraph on the Complete Brahms Symphonies

PRE-ORDER NOW **amazon.co.uk**

Discover more... www.emiclassics.co.uk www.youtube.com/emiclassics www.facebook.com/emivirginclassics www.twitter.com/emiclassics

GRAMOPHONE

Contents – September 2011

'Abbado seems to wallow in impending death; Barenboim looks past the pathos and finds life'

Ken Smith on Daniel Barenboim's DVD of Mahler's Symphony No 9 – page 89

LETTERS

Neglected George Lloyd; Baroque DVDs
8

EDITOR'S CHOICE

An Earth-shaking *Fidelio* from Abbado;
Lise de la Salle, back on form for Liszt;
Miklós Rózsa's wonderful Cello Concerto
12

SOUNDBITES

FOR THE RECORD

Gramophone's Artist of the Year shortlist;
the next Glyndebourne chief is announced;
a new label from Paul McCreesh
14

A CONVERSATION WITH...

...the violinist and conductor Gábor
Takács-Nagy, on interweaving football and
music in his new Manchester job
19

DIARY

Cellist Daniel Müller-Schott on his lifelong
love of Britten's music and Britten's love of
the Baroque
21

ONE TO WATCH

At a time when Warner Classics aren't
signing many new artists, violinist Rachel
Kolly d'Alba is set to be their new star
23

RICHARD EYRE

As the director pens his last *Gramophone*
column, he agonises about the difficulties as
well as the delights of writing about music
24

BIOGRAPHY OF AN INSTRUMENT

The fascinating story of Handel's organ,
its restoration and rebirth
26

FEATURES

ABBEY ROAD, A HISTORY

From Elgar to Domingo, the world's most
famous recording studios have witnessed
classical music history (with a bit of pop
thrown in!). Martin Cullingford investigates
30

THE HEROISM OF KENT NAGANO

A maestro who made his name with musical
rarities has brought his Montreal Symphony
back to the mainstream
38

THE CANONISATION OF NIELSEN

It's Nielsen's time to join the greats
42

THE GRAMOPHONE COLLECTION

Which recording of Elgar's Second Symphony
is the must-have?
46

ENCORE

MUSICAL JOURNEYS

Dawn Upshaw as festival curator in Ojai;
personal reflections on Cardiff Singer of the
World; early music in Stockholm
97

PICK OF THE MUSICAL MONTH

Great events, from Southwell Minster
to Symphony Hall, Boston
101

AUDIO AND VISUAL

The latest moves in stereo networking
104

MY MUSIC

Rock and musical theatre icon Murray Head
reveals his gradual but intense love affair
with classical music
122



Elgar and Menuhin at Abbey Road Studios 30



Kent Nagano, the maestro in Montreal 38

ORCHESTRAL

Janowski's mighty Bruckner; superb posthumous Dvořák from Mackerras; Nico Muhly's much-hyped electric violin concerto

54

CHAMBER

Gerhardt salutes Casals; Grieg interpretations compared

62

INSTRUMENTAL

Roscoe's Beethoven journey continues; exploring Langaard's piano works

68

VOCAL

Big beast choral works by Mendelssohn; Bernarda Fink goes to Slovenia

72

OPERA

The forgotten 'English' *Tristan*; Nathalie Stutzmann singing and conducting; Pergolesi the opera composer

80

DVD AND BLU-RAY

Glyndebourne's *Billy Budd* on screen; Oistrakh live in London

86

REPLAY

Radio archives offer a telling glimpse of Glenn Gould at home in Canada

90

SUBSCRIPTIONS

28

CLASSIFIEDS

112

NEW RELEASES

117

REVIEWS INDEX

120

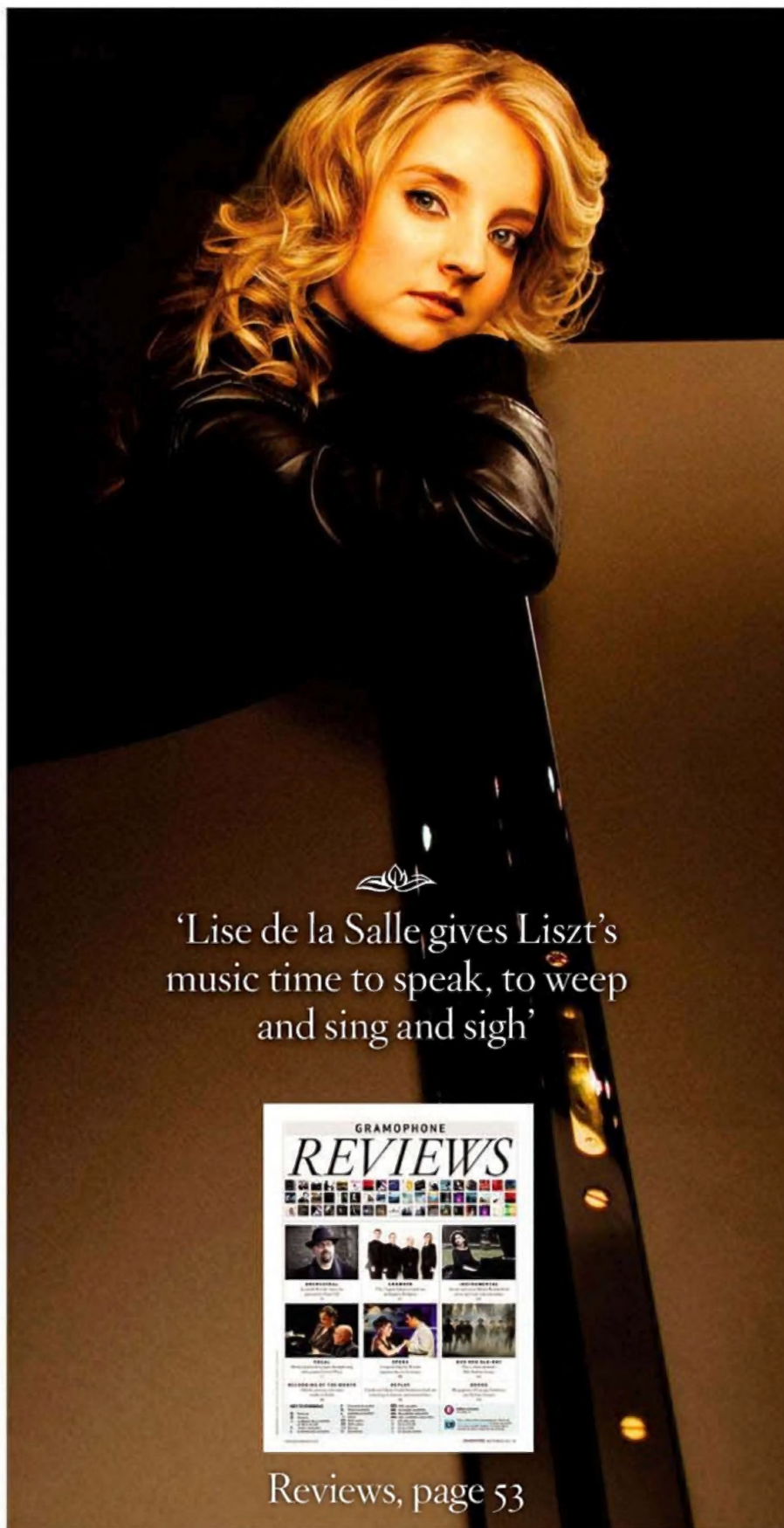
www.gramophone.co.uk


BRIDGE ON DISC

Seventy years on from the death of Frank Bridge, Peter Dickinson complements the Proms' generous helpings of the English composer's music with an overview of his music on record


ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Who should be crowned Artist of the Year at October's *Gramophone* Awards? Log on and have your say





'Lise de la Salle gives Liszt's music time to speak, to weep and sing and sigh'



Reviews, page 53



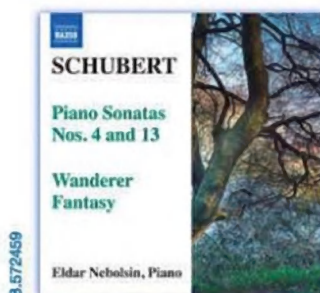
8.572583

DEBUSSY

Orchestral Works Vol. 6

"They capture perfectly the flash and dazzle of the *Suite bergamasque* particularly in the high-voltage opening... and charm us with the graceful *Petite Suite*"

The Observer



8.572459

SCHUBERT

Piano Sonatas Nos. 4 and 13

"Nebolsin's grasp of structure, simplicity of approach with clear, natural phrasing, and the song-like purity of the recorded sound make this a very special Schubert disc"

Classic FM Editor's Choice



8.572332

RESPIGHI

Violin Concerto

"Left unfinished in 1903, the concerto has been completed by Salvatore Di Vittorio, and its performance here is spirited"

The Times



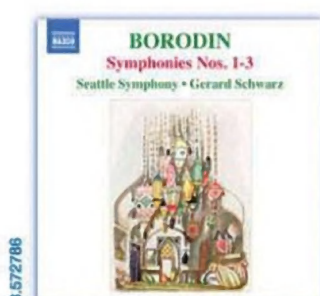
8.572258

MOZART

Divertimento in E flat major

"In music bursting with some of Mozart's catchiest tunes, there's never a moment that turns dull or static in this performance, and the sonics let the music breathe in a warm but ideally intimate setting"

ClassicsToday.com 10/10



8.572786

BORODIN

Symphonies Nos. 1-3

"Three cheers to the Seattle Symphony for championing Borodin's symphonies, particularly in such fresh, lithe performances... glorious music, played with character and vitality"

The Daily Telegraph



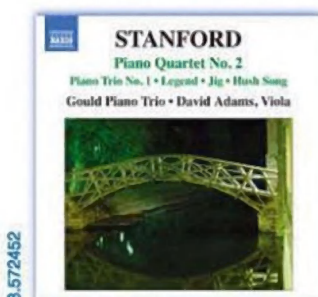
8.572415

CASELLA

Symphony No. 3

"The symphony, superbly played here, has a resolute individual voice and drive."

The Daily Telegraph

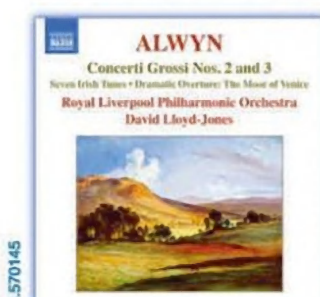


8.572452

STANFORD

Piano Quartet No. 2

A world premiere recording of the melodic Piano Quartet No. 2 performed by the Gould Trio and violist David Adams.



8.570145

ALWYN

Concerti Grossi Nos. 2 and 3

The final volume of Alwyn's orchestral music in this landmark Naxos series. "Yet another enticing helping of Alwyn courtesy of David Lloyd-Jones, Naxos and the William Alwyn Foundation"

Gramophone on 8.570704 (Alwyn: Concerto Grosso No. 1)

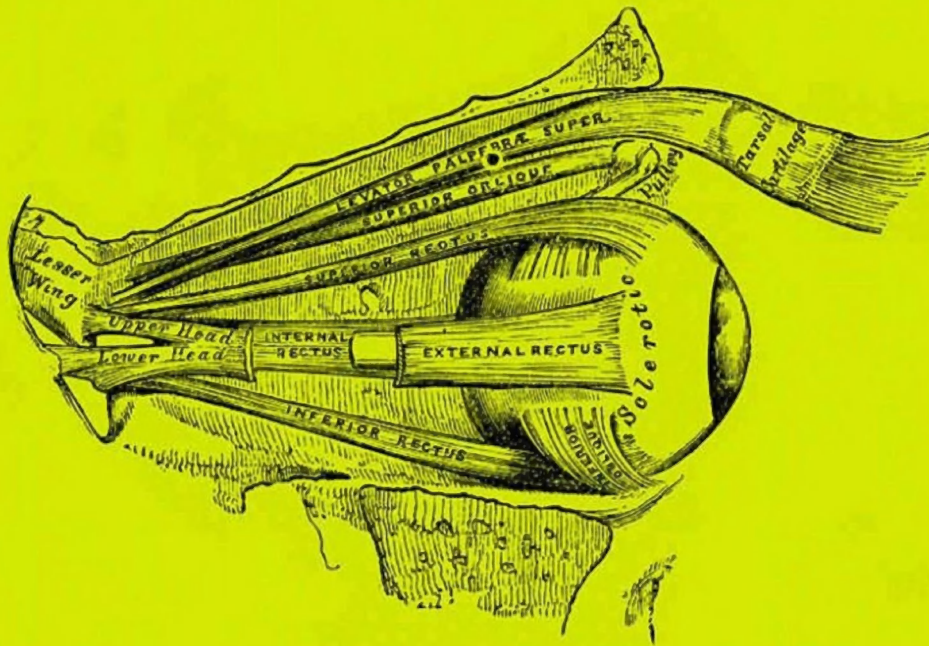


8.572708

BRITTEN

Complete Scottish Songs

Sleeping in an atmosphere of ancient Scottish musical tradition, Benjamin Britten's setting of texts by Robert Burns in *A Birthday Hansel* was his final song-cycle. Acclaimed Scottish tenor Mark Wilde's sensitivities embrace both the dramatic and mellifluous qualities of the music.



re·ac·tion: A response to a stimulus. A reaction, as that of an organism or a mechanism, to a specific stimulus.

Hand-eye coordination is the coordinated *control* of eye movement with hand movement, and the processing of visual input to guide reaching and grasping along with the use of proprioception of the hands to guide the eyes. In simple terms, eye-hand coordination involves the coordinated vision and hand *movement* to execute a task. It has been studied in activities as diverse as driving, the movement of solid objects such as wooden blocks, sporting *performance* and music reading.



GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
GOTHENBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
 BRUCKNER, SIBELIUS, NIELSEN: SYMPHONIES

The sensation that is Gustavo Dudamel releases his first recordings with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, whom he became Musical Director of in 2006.

3 x CD: 4779449

GRAMOPHONE is published by Haymarket Consumer, Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9BE, United Kingdom. www.gramophone.co.uk e-mail gramophone@haymarket.com Volume 89 Number 1074

EDITORIAL

Phone 020 8267 5136 Fax 020 8267 5844
e-mail gramophone@haymarket.com

EDITOR

James Inverice

DEPUTY EDITOR

Sarah Kirkup / 020 8267 5829

REVIEWS EDITOR

Andrew Mellor / 020 8267 5125

EDITOR, GRAMOPHONE ONLINE

Martin Cullingford / 020 8267 5044

PRODUCTION EDITOR

Antony Craig / 020 8267 5874

STAFF WRITER

Charlotte Smith / 020 8267 5155

SUB-EDITOR

David Thresher / 020 8267 5135

ART EDITOR

Jon Butterworth / 020 8267 5091

AUDIO EDITOR

Andrew Everard / 020 8267 5029

PICTURE EDITOR

Sunita Sharma-Gibson / 020 8267 5861

EDITORIAL AND PUBLISHING CO-ORDINATOR

Sue McWilliams / 020 8267 5136

GRAMOPHONE SECRETARY

Libby McPhee

LIBRARIAN

Francesco Burns

ADVERTISING

Phone 020 8267 5060 Fax 020 8267 5866

e-mail ashley.murison@haymarket.com

COMMERCIAL HEAD

Ashley Murison / 020 8267 5853

SALES MANAGER

Kane Dalton / 020 8267 5959

SENIOR DISPLAY SALES EXECUTIVE

Esther Zuker / 020 8267 5199

DISPLAY SALES EXECUTIVE

Stephen Nixon / 020 8267 5101

CLASSIFIED SALES EXECUTIVE

Paul Primmell / 020 8267 5976

PRODUCTION CONTROLLER

Geeta Chambers / 020 8267 5588

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BACK ISSUES

08456 777823 (UK only)

+44 (0)1795 592 980 (overseas)

gramophone@servicehelpline.co.uk

US & Canada 1-866-918-1446

haymarket@msnews.com

PUBLISHING

Phone 020 8267 5136 Fax 020 8267 5844

PUBLISHER

Kate Law kate.law@haymarket.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

James Jolly

BRAND MANAGER

Lucy Da Re / 020 8267 5182

LICENSING DIRECTOR

Tim Bulley / 020 8267 5078 tim.bulley@haymarket.com

GROUP PRODUCTION MANAGER

Stuart White / 020 8267 5420

DIRECT MARKETING MANAGER

Lucy Harmer / lucy.harmer@haymarket.com

SYNDICATION SALES

Roshini Sethi / 020 8267 5396

HAYMARKET CONSUMER MEDIA

DESIGN DIRECTOR

Paul Harpin

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Mark Payton

SALES DIRECTOR

Rachael Prasher

STRATEGY & PLANNING DIRECTOR

Bob McDowell

MANAGING DIRECTOR

David Prasher

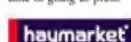
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Kevin Costello

The September issue of *Gramophone* is on sale from Aug 3; the October issue will be on sale from Sept 5 (both UK). Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of statements in this magazine but we cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, or for matters arising from clerical or printer's errors, or an advertiser not completing his contract. Letters to the editor requiring a personal reply should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. We have made every effort to secure permission to use copyright material. Where material has been used inadvertently or we have been unable to trace the copyright owner, acknowledgement will be made in a future issue. Printed in England by Wyndham Leon. ISSN 0017-310X. © 2011 Haymarket Consumer. All rights reserved.

North American edition: *Gramophone* (USPS 881080) is published 13 times a year by Haymarket Magazines Ltd, c/o Mercury International Ltd of 365 Blair Road, Avenel, New Jersey 07001. For North American subscription rates please contact: Tel: 1-866-918-1446, e-mail: haymarket@msnews.com. Periodicals paid at Rahway, NJ. Postmaster please send address correction changes to Gramophone, c/o Mercury International at the above address.

We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, or for matters arising from clerical or printer's errors, or an advertiser not completing his contract. Regarding concert listings, all information is correct at the time of going to press.



Haymarket is certified by BSI to environmental standard ISO14001

Our Contributors



Researching his Abbey Road story was fascinating, says online editor **MARTIN CULLINGFORD**, "particularly meeting the world-leading sound engineers and technical masters whose role in its iconic history is so often unsung".



Reviews editor **ANDREW MELLOR** has a insatiable appetite for Nordic design, literature and music and passionately believes we aren't hearing enough Nielsen. He relished the chance to help oil the wheels of the Dane's resurgence.



Leading illustrator **STEPHEN COLLINS** says of his own classical riff on the Beatles' famous Abbey Road album cover, "It really worked because Iain MacMillan's original shot is so richly detailed."

Our Reviewers

Andrew Achenbach

Nalen Anthoni

Mike Ashman

Philip Clark

Rob Cowan*

Justin Davidson

Jeremy Dibble

Peter Dickinson

Jed Distler

Duncan Druce

Adrian Edwards

Richard Fairman

David Fallows

David Fanning

Iain Fenlon

Fabrice Fitch

Jonathan

Freeman-Attwood

Edward Greenfield

David Gutman

Lindsay Kemp

Philip Kennicott

Tess Knight

Andrew Lamb

Richard Lawrence

Ivan March

Ivan Moody

Bryce Morrison

Jeremy Nicholas

Christopher Nickol

Geoffrey Norris

Richard Osborne

Stephen Plaistow

Peter Quantrell

Guy Rickards

Malcolm Riley

Marc Rochester

Julie Anne Sadle

Edward Seckerson

Pwyl ap Siôn

Harriet Smith

Ken Smith

David Patrick Stearns

David Thresher

David Vickers

John Warrack

Richard Whitehouse

Arnold Whittall

Richard Wigmore

William Yeoman

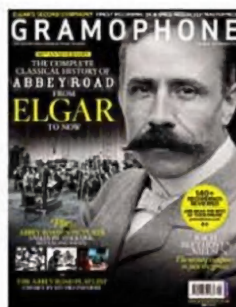
* Contributing editor

EDITORIAL

GRAMOPHONE

Founded in 1923 by Sir Compton Mackenzie and Christopher Stone as 'an organ of candid opinion for the numerous possessors of gramophones'

Forget Beatlemania, Elgar owns the street



When you come out of Warwick Avenue underground station, the closest to Abbey Road, you could be forgiven for thinking that only one group of musicians has ever recorded in that most illustrious of studios (or studio complex, as it has now grown to be). There's a little shop near the station – or there was last time I went there – that sells every bit of Beatles memorabilia you can imagine. John, Paul, George and Ringo stare out from mugs, fridge magnets and the like as though they own the street. In terms of reputation, they do. They have done ever since they walked proudly and in one case without shoes across its now-iconic zebra crossing. Yet before Abbey Road belonged to the Beatles, it belonged to Elgar, who opened the studios and soon afterwards recorded his Violin Concerto there with the young Yehudi Menuhin. It belonged, literally, to EMI, who brought and still bring the cream of the world's classical talent to record there. It belonged to classical music.

In many ways, actually, that remains true today. For all that the world and his wife revere Abbey Road as the heartland of the Fab Four, I'm willing to bet that almost every rocker who stands before its microphones

'Abbey Road Studios is 80 years old this year. It remains as a living testament to the history of recorded music and to its present'

is conscious of the weight of history – and that includes pre-Beatles history, breathing down his or her neck. And in some ways, of course, Paul McCartney himself acknowledged that debt when he recorded his own trio of classical albums at the studios.

Abbey Road Studios is 80 years old this year. It remains as a living testament to the history of recorded music and to its present. Martin Cullingford spent months uncovering the little-known classical music history of Abbey Road – which included interviewing pivotal but hitherto reclusive figures – for this issue's cover story. It's a must-read for anyone interested in the story of recordings and their most famous home. As for Abbey Road's future, following that shaky period recently where it seemed EMI might sell it, that must remain somewhat in doubt. The great label itself is, at the time of writing, up for sale again. Let's hope whoever buys it takes care of its crown jewel.

James



Notes & Letters

Baroque opera on DVD • The conductors of the future • DJ confusion

Music and politics

The claim by John Hunt (Letters, August) that "blame has been well and truly aired" and guilt apportioned in the case of the German Third Reich is simply not true. Most of the artists who thrived in that infamous era got away scot-free, with hardly an interruption to their earnings.

Mr Hunt throws up the old smokescreen of an equivalence between the Hitler and Stalin regimes and asserts that no one blames musicians for working under Stalin. He has obviously never read anything about Tikhon Khrennikov, or even the vast Shostakovich literature.

Regarding his borrowed pay-off line about what C sharp minor has to do with – if only music did consist solely of keys and sharps and flats. But such is not the case.

Verdi's and Smetana's music inspired those struggling against Austrian oppression. The orchestral music of Elgar and Bartók, to name just two, has extra-musical associations. And I know, from a family connection, that William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw) was already obsessed with Wagner and inter-related delusions of racial superiority by the early 1920s, before he even met Hitler. It's plain to see the



Telemann: no operas on film

LETTER OF THE MONTH

By George

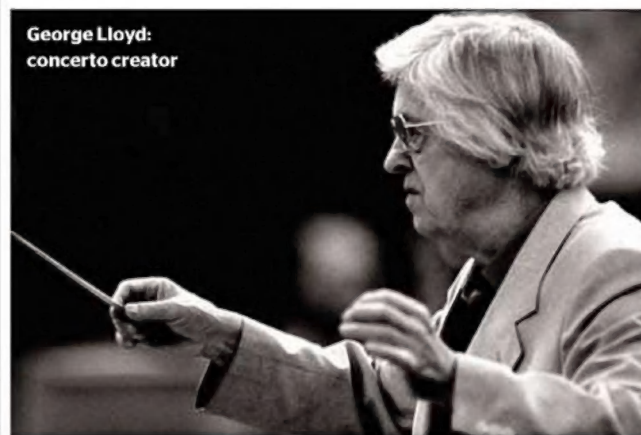
If Yo-Yo Ma (Interview, July, page 30) wishes to enrich his repertoire of concertos, he need look no further than the penultimate (1997) work of the late great George Lloyd, in my view the perfect companion piece to the famous earlier work for the same instrument by Elgar.

I was fortunate (and privileged) to participate in the promotion of the recent English premiere of this beautiful piece of music when it was played by the gifted US-born Bartholomew LaFollette, ably accompanied by the excellent pro-am Philharmonia Britannica Symphony Orchestra under their MD Peter Fender here in London. Like Graham Fitkin, whose concerto is being played by Yo-Yo Ma at the Proms this year, Lloyd was a Cornishman – born in St Ives. It must be something in the air!

Its absence from the Proms (along with much else by its composer) is one of life's great mysteries.

Mark Newberry

London, UK



George Lloyd: concerto creator

www.prestoclassical.co.uk is a website that speaks your language, "underpinned by an evident love of music and the world of recordings" (*Gramophone*). No other site selling classical CDs and DVDs is arranged in such a logical and accessible format, where you can easily find lists of composers' works, compare different options, view recommendations and read reviews. We believe that you

will find it one of the most user-friendly classical music sites on the internet.

The letter of the month receives £50 of Presto Classical gift vouchers.

Please send letters for publication in the September issue by August 8.

**PRESTO
CLASSICAL**

moral dimension in *Die Zauberflöte* and perceive the irony in having a bunch of Nazis declaiming its sentiments. Similarly, who can dispute the irony in a conductor performing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with its text about all men being brothers, with swastika

flags in the background?

Tully Potter

Billericay, Essex, UK

Baroque DVDs

On reading Richard Lawrence's appreciative review of the

recent CD "Mostly Mozart" (July, page 90), I was prompted into reflecting on the disparity between the amount of excellent recordings of Baroque and early classical music available on CD and the relatively small number of operas that have been filmed and released on DVD. Companies producing films seem reluctant for the most part to venture outside the canon of classic works that make up the repertoire of most opera houses, mainly works of the 19th century.

There are not only a large number of significant operas totally unrepresented on film but also composers who have been utterly neglected. Alessandro Scarlatti, Jommelli, Sammartini, Leonardo Vinci, Salieri and Holzbauer are absent from the filmography. None of the operas of JC Bach or Telemann have been filmed, and only a paltry number of those by Haydn. Hasse, a crucial figure in the history of opera, is represented with just one film (which may be currently out of print). Some labels have been pioneers, Dynamic having released operas by Cimarosa, Leo, Galuppi and Martín y Soler, while Alpha has issued two operas by Lully.

The revival of early music is not yet finished. A great deal has been accomplished to restore the art of this era to a valued place in our culture, and much of this has been achieved with panache and love, but in certain areas the revival has scarcely begun.

Andrew Pritchard

Worcestershire, UK

Making the Switch

I am writing to you regarding your concertos article (July, page 35). I felt I should write you regarding the specific discussion of Gabriel Prokofiev's Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra.

I feel slightly ashamed to say that the “fidget-house pioneer” Switch you mentioned is not the one who will be performing the concerto; I am.

I feel bad pointing this out because (a) it's not really your mistake – half the media coverage I get makes exactly the same mistake, as he is the ever-so-slightly more famous Switch and it's my bad for not having checked out if anyone else might have called themselves that as well (total count stands at eight by my reckoning, of various levels of fame). And (b) whereas Dave Taylor is a respected house producer, I am a turntablist – analog-esque manipulation of music via “scratching” and related techniques. Positively, I am comforted by the notion that readers' expectations will be even further subverted by the misinformation, but if some note could be made to say that I am a different Switch to that mentioned in the article, I would be most grateful.

Anthony John Culverwell, aka DJ Switch, three times DMC World DJ Champion, six times DMC UK DJ Champion
PS Perhaps the three consecutive world championship titles are a useful way of distinguishing between the two of us. Smiley face.

Phone concerto

Might I suggest another “unlikely concerto to surprise and delight”? David Baker, a composer and pedagogue active in both the classical and jazz worlds, has written a Concertino for



Susanna Mälkki:
just missed out

Cellular Phones and Symphony Orchestra. Although it still awaits its first recording, I imagine that most live concerts these days aren't all that dissimilar in effect.

Stephen Luttman

*Howard M Skinner Music Library
U of Northern Colorado, US*

Top Marx?

Caroline Gill contends that Lavinia Meijer is “everything you'd expect a harpist to be: beautiful...delicate and decorous” (July, page 19). The lovely Ms Meijer is indisputably all of these things but Ms Gill's characterisation of our mental image of a harpist is, as you Brits say, a bit dodgy.

Put on your thinking caps and consider this: who is the most famous harpist who has ever lived? The individual who would be cited if you asked any musically illiterate person to name a harpist? Clue: his second instrument was the klaxon horn. Harpo Marx was kind of beautiful, in his way, I guess, but nobody would ever have called him delicate, and he might well qualify for the title of the least decorous human being ever to draw breath. The Marx Brothers were the crown princes of indecorum – Zeppo excepted – but even given this stiff competition Harpo wins. The harp, incidentally, was no prop, but an indispensable element of his daily life. In his autobiography, Harpo revealed that his ritual upon waking was to haul his instrument into the bathroom and to sit on the throne and play, “until Bach moves my bowels”. Whatever works.

David English

Somerville, MA, USA

Young conductors

Surely you could have included Susanna Mälkki among the names of increasingly prominent and still relatively young female conductors (June, page 41). Only 42, she has conducted the Boston Symphony and will make her Chicago Symphony debut in the 2011-12 season. At a Mostly Mozart Festival concert in New York a couple of years

Krzysztof Urbański:
leading maestro



ago, I heard her deliver a bracing *Eroica* and a new work by Kaija Saariaho. Surely there are few conductors equally at home with such different composers as Saariaho and Beethoven.

Gerald Stein

Northbrook, IL, USA

Our cut-off age for this feature was 40, which is why Ms Mälkki, clearly a contender otherwise, was not included – Ed.

Younger still

I was interested in “Tomorrow's Icons” and wanted to draw your attention to one of the world's brilliant young talents who deserves to be on any “top” musician list: Krzysztof Urbański.

I have known him for almost 10 years, since he started to study conducting with me at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw. From the beginning, I saw his talent developing rapidly. When Urbański officially takes the reins of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra this September he will, at just 28, be the youngest music director of any major orchestra in the US. He also holds the post of chief conductor of the Trondheim SO, a position he was offered after just one concert. He makes a major impact on virtually all the orchestras with which he works and is a huge success not only with audiences but also with the musicians of the orchestra.

In just a few seasons on the professional circuit, Urbański has already worked with some of the leading orchestras in

the UK, Europe and the USA. His talent is prodigious and he is a conductor of a profound musicianship. Through his hands he is able to communicate expressively his thoughtful approach to music-making with astonishing maturity. In addition, his winning personality serves him well to become one of the most successful maestros of his generation.

Antoni Wit, Music Director

Warsaw Philharmonic, Poland

Japan appeal

As someone who spends a lot of time in Japan, and is writing this letter from Tokyo, I am extremely concerned that the live classical music business has been decimated by the number of artists cancelling their visits due to unfounded fears about radiation.

I wish to urge all musicians to continue touring and performing there. The Japanese people have always attached great importance to visiting artists, orchestras and opera companies. They need us now more than ever. It would be a tragedy if Japanese audiences were to be starved of international talent, particularly new artists who are the future of music.

Max Hole, COO

Universal Music Group International

Editorial notes

Julie Anne Sadie's review of Julia Wedman's new Biber disc (July, page 73) mistakenly described Ms Wedman as American whereas she is in fact Canadian.



Suk: 'a superbly accomplished violinist'

JOSEF SUK Violinist
Born August 8, 1929;
Died July 6, 2011

The passing of Josef Suk will prove especially sad for lovers of Czech repertoire who will no doubt own either of his benchmark recordings of the Violin Concerto by his great-grandfather Antonín Dvořák (both versions coupled with the adorable Romance in F minor, which was hardly known before Suk recorded it). His grandfather, Dvořák's son-in-law, was the composer Josef Suk, whose *Asrael* Symphony is one of the 20th century's orchestral masterworks and whose fiery Fantasy for violin and orchestra was another work that Josef junior excelled in. Indeed, it was Josef senior who first gave his grandson a violin, which he started to play at the age of six.

Josef Suk was widely celebrated as, to quote one critic, "a superbly accomplished violinist with a silken tone and complete command of his instrument". He was just 11 years old when he first played in public. He then travelled to Paris and Brussels representing the younger generation of Czech musicians as part of a cultural exchange. The iron grip of communism in the late 1940s meant that artists wishing to travel abroad had a hard time of it; but the government knew when it was on to a good thing (Suk was even then something of a legend within the music loving

fraternity) and was willing to allow him the privilege of undertaking foreign tours.

The 1950s saw him filling significant roles, as orchestral leader of the Prague National Theatre, as leader of the Prague Quartet and as a founder member of the Suk Piano Trio, whose recordings still command enormous respect. His appearances during the Czech Philharmonic's world tour in 1959 proved revelatory and his Proms appearances in the mid-1960s inspired countless critical accolades. He went on to make a celebrated recording of the Beethoven Concerto under Sir Adrian Boult. In 1974 he founded the Suk Chamber Orchestra; after the Suk Trio disbanded he played and recorded trios with pianist Julius Katchen and cellist János Starker. Josef Suk officially retired in 2004, though his lengthy recording career ended only last year with a golden glow and a programme of transcribed "Songs My Great-Grandfather Taught Me" with Vladimir Ashkenazy at the piano. Prior to that were numerous memorable highlights, including a fine set of Bach Solo Sonatas and Partitas (EMI), Beethoven violin sonatas with his soul-mate piano partner Jan Panenka (Supraphon), various duo sonata recordings and the Suk Trio legacy. Wherever the art of fine violin-playing is celebrated, Josef Suk's name will be fondly remembered. **Rob Cowan**



Gerhard Unger: a natural in the buffo repertoire

GERHARD UNGER Tenor
Born November 26, 1916;
Died July 4, 2011

The German tenor Gerhard Unger was born in Bad Salzungen, studied at the Berlin Hochschule and began concert and oratorio work in 1945 after the war. His opera debut was in 1947 in Weimar, where he was a member of the company until 1952. From that year until 1961 he was a member of the Berlin State Opera, where he appeared first in the *buffo* repertoire, then in lyric roles such as Tamino, Alfredo and Pinkerton. Once the Berlin Wall was put up, he moved west to Stuttgart, appearing regularly for that company right up until 1982 and for the Hamburg State Opera from 1962 to 1973.

Internationally Unger soon became a reliable and much-recorded star of the German light comic repertoire. In 1951 he was David in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in the first post-war Bayreuth Festival under Herbert von Karajan. This became one of Unger's signature roles: he can be heard in no fewer than five recordings under Karajan, Kempe (Dresden 1951), Knappertsbusch (Bayreuth 1952), Rosbaud (RAI 1955), and Kubelík (Bavarian Radio 1968).

Unger appeared regularly at the Salzburg Festival, notably as Pedrillo between 1965 and 1975 in the production staged by Giorgio Strehler, which was kept in the festival's repertory for 10 years and also shown at

La Scala, Milan. He also sang Monostatos in two stagings of *Die Zauberflöte* by Oscar Fritz Schuh and, in 1974, by Strehler and conducted by Karajan; Valzacchi in *Der Rosenkavalier* (1969, staged by Rudolf Hartmann); Brighella in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; and he returned for a small role in Karajan's *Salome* (1977-78). In concert at Salzburg, he was heard in *Carmina Burana* and in Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher*. At La Scala, he sang Jaquino in 1960 and Mime in 1975, a role he continued to sing occasionally until 1987 in Stuttgart. He made guest appearances in Paris, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Marseilles and Turin.

Unger has a wide discography in addition to his five *Meistersinger* recordings. He can be heard as Jaquino for Hermann Abendroth, Erich Kleiber and Otto Klemperer, Monostatos for Klemperer and Karajan, Pedrillo for Beecham and Josef Krips, Alwa in *Lulu* for Leopold Ludwig, Brighella in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Valzacchi for Karl Böhm, in a wide range of less mainstream German operas including *Der Waffenschmied*, *Der Bettelstudent*, *Königskinder*, *Der Barbier von Bagdad* and, under Scottish maestro James Lockhart, a late recording of Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker*. He also sings the roasting swan solo in the EMI Frühbeck de Burgos *Carmina Burana*. **Mike Ashman**

COMING NEXT MONTH

GRAMOPHONE



CHAILLY'S BEETHOVEN

More than any other body of work in the mainstream repertoire, Beethoven's symphonies are the ultimate measure of a great conductor. That Riccardo Chailly has bided his time before recording the nine makes the results all the more eagerly anticipated - what will he find in them, after decades of exploration? In an exclusive, in-depth interview, Chailly explains how, after Beethoven's symphonies, everything changed. And how they have changed him.

ON SALE SEPTEMBER 5

PHOTOGRAPHY: APIS/BRAMIS/ALAMY

OPUS ARTE



THE ROYAL OPERA

ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE



MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE
RICHARD THOMAS

ANNA NICOLE

EVA-MARIA WESTBROEK · GERALD FINLEY
ALAN OKE · SUSAN BICKLEY

ROYAL OPERA CHORUS
ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE
CONDUCTOR ANTONIO PAPPANO
DIRECTOR RICHARD JONES



AVAILABLE ON DVD & BLU-RAY

FOLLOW US ON
TWITTER · FACEBOOK · YOUTUBE



www.opusarte.com

Editor's Choice

James Inverne's pick of this month's outstanding new discs – hear excerpts online



Log on to the *Gramophone* Player to hear excerpts from all our Editor's Choice recordings. Also this month, courtesy of EMI Classics, you can enjoy Abbey Road through the ages. Hear excerpts from: Yehudi Menuhin's first recording of Elgar's Violin Concerto; Dame Janet Baker's *Sea Pictures*; Jacqueline du Pré and Daniel Barenboim's Brahms Cello Sonatas; André Previn's Debussy *Images*; and from the Angela Gheorghiu/Roberto Alagna/Antonio Pappano *La Rondine*. Our Archive recording this month is The Carmirelli Quartet performing Prokofiev's String Quartet No 2. Enjoy all this and more online – and for free – at www.gramophone.co.uk



RACHMANINOV
Piano Concertos Nos 1 & 4
Simon Trpčeski *pf*
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra / Vasily Petrenko
Avie AV2191
Even as the much-hailed Rachmaninov piano concertos set from Leif Ove Andsnes is still green in the memory, here a very fine rival cycle (albeit the couplings are different) is completed. The two are complementary – as reviewer Geoffrey Norris put it to me, “Trpčeski is the more passionate, Andsnes the more considered”. Get both!
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 59**



RÓZSA
‘Orchestral Works, Vol 2’
Jennifer Pike *vm*
Paul Watkins *vc*
BBC Philharmonic Orchestra / Rumon Gamba
Chandos CHAN10674
There's still a certain snobbishness around film composers, despite the fact that many of the greats wrote some very fine classical pieces. So it is with Miklós Rózsa, still (and rightly, actually) best known for *Ben-Hur*, *El Cid* et al. But here is proof that his work away from the screen is richly enjoyable and should be explored.
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 60**



BYRD
Complete Consort Music
Phantasm / Laurence Dreyfuss
Linn CKD372
Byrd is all the rage among music lovers these days, thanks largely to the sensational *Gramophone* Recording of the Year-winning Byrd Edition from The Cardinal's Musick. And here comes an exploration of his chamber music that reveals again his wonderful melodic invention. Add to that clean, spacious sound to match Phantasm's clean, spacious playing and it's a winner. Pure enjoyment.
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 64**



CHAUSSON
Concert for Violin, Piano and String Quartet
MATHIEU
Piano Trio. Piano Quintet
David Lefèvre *vm* Alain Lefèvre *pf* Alcan Quartet
Analekta AN2 9286
Most attention here will focus on the works by André Mathieu. Alain Lefèvre has been a leading advocate for the music of the man they once called “the Canadian Mozart” but whose work then fell out of the public eye. Mathieu was only 39 when he died and here is the music of an imagination still in the first rush of invention.
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 64**

Reissue of the month

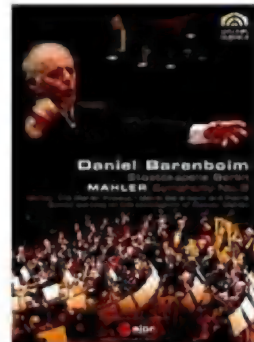


LISZT
Piano Concerto No 1, etc
Arthur Rubinstein *pf* RCA
Victor Symphony Orch / Alfred Wallenstein
RCA Red Seal 88697 84019-2
There was an interview with Arthur Rubinstein in the November 1968 issue

of *Gramophone* where the esteemed pianist said that, although “I suppose I'm quite well-established as a recording artist,” he had little advice for young artists. “We're all so different and what one can do, another can't.”

As this magisterial Liszt traversal shows, there was much that Rubinstein could do that others couldn't, but also that he was above all an individual artist. It couldn't, after all, be anyone else.
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 71**

DVD & Blu-ray of the month



MAHLER
Symphony No 9
Staatskapelle Berlin / Daniel Barenboim
C Major 703708
It has taken quite

some years for Daniel Barenboim's name to be associated with the works of Mahler in the way that is with those of, say, Wagner. Some of his Mahler recordings were perhaps made a little early, but there's certainly nothing unfinished about this.

Whether the non-rivalry, or whatever one should call it, with Pierre Boulez in this shared cycle has projected him further into Mahler's sound world, this account is overwhelming.
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 89**

Claudio Abbado's Fidelio: 'This is Abbado's show. It always was. It's why you'll buy the set – and you'll be thrilled you did'



'CASALS ENCORES'

Alban Gerhardt *cc*
Cecile Licad *pf*
Hyperion CDA67831

An unexpected disc from a cellist one usually thinks of as a heavyweight. But it wouldn't be true to say that Alban Gerhardt and his pianist Cecile Licad are in hair-letting-down mode for these favourite Pablo Casals sweetmeats. Rather he brings to them absolutely the same seriousness of approach and sensitivity that he does to everything. And it works for an album that feels worthwhile as well as easily digestible.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 67**

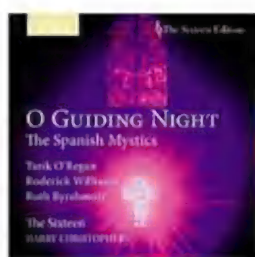


LISZT

Piano Works
Lise de la Salle *pf*
Naïve V5267

It's hard to believe that Lise de la Salle is only 23 years old. Even in this age of prodigies, 23 is hardly long in the tooth, but it feels as though this brilliant young pianist has been turning out first-rate recordings for donkeys' years. The truth is that for the last four or five years a new de la Salle recording has almost always been a highlight. So it is with this Liszt. Her poise, penetrating insight, it's all the work of an older artist. Except it isn't.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 71**

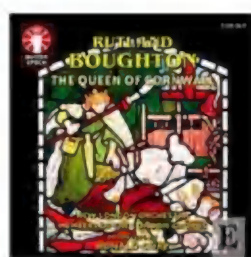


'O GUIDING NIGHT'

The Sixteen /
Harry Christophers
Coro COR16090

By virtue of some neat time travel and historical research, a trio of today's composers here bring to life two of the so-called Spanish Mystics of the 16th and 17th centuries. Tarik O'Regan, Ruth Byrchmore and Roderick Williams grapple with making contemporary the texts of old. They succeed amazingly well – managing to inhabit both times at once, with a through line of spirituality. The Sixteen are on fine form.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 78**

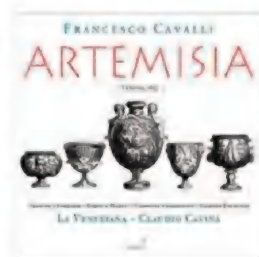


BOUGHTON

The Queen of Cornwall
Soloists; New London
Orchestra / Ronald Corp
Dutton 2CDLX7256

There's no use pretending that Rutland Boughton's version of the Tristan and Iseult legend is anywhere near Wagner's level. But that's not the point of this charming and increasingly involving opera. Rather, it inhabits the world of Vaughan Williams, drawing on the rich tapestry of folk music to suggest the context from which the tale sprang and drawing power from that. And it's beautifully recorded here.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 80**



CAVALLI

Artemisia
Soloists; La Venexiana /
Claudio Cavina
Glossa GCD920918

The series of operas from Glossa conducted by Claudio Cavina has been one of the recorded glories of recent years and this latest – if you can pick your way through the murky plot – is no exception. Reviewer Richard Lawrence ventures into the maze-like story so I won't go into those details here. But he also calls this "a triumph" for Cavina and the brilliant La Venexiana and I couldn't agree more.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 80**

Recording of the month



BEETHOVEN

Fidelio
Lucerne Festival Orchestra /
Claudio Abbado
Decca 478 2551DH2

Pardon me if I say "At last!" An operatic masterpiece, bang in the centre of the repertoire, from the baton of one of our greatest conductors. So with this magnificent recording, Abbado can finally tick *Fidelio* off his list.

But to start with the cast, Nina Stemme provides a Leonore of urgency as well as musicality. Jonas Kaufmann brings a caged animalism to

much of Florestan, while Christof Fischesser and Falk Struckmann are characterful and satisfying as Rocco and Pizarro.

Do I sound like I'm holding back a touch? That's because this is Abbado's show. It always was. It's why you'll buy the set – and you'll be thrilled you did. The conductor's unique blend of high energy and refinement is at its peak here. And then there's that other ingredient that so many conductors lose as they progress – hunger. Hunger to be at the core of this

blazing score. Abbado at this level of intensity is absolutely on the same level as a Toscanini or, more apposite for this work, Otto Klemperer.

The Mahler Chamber and Lucerne Festival orchestras are clearly determined to rise to Abbado's demands – and rise they do. Enough. For more detailed consideration read Richard Osborne's review. From me you'll only get hyperbole on this one. Now, perhaps, an Abbado *Otello*? A *Salome*? Just asking.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 80**

SOUNDBITES

Gallery View p16 » Conversation With... p19 » Diary p21 » One to Watch p23 »

Richard Eyre p24 » Biography of an Instrument p26 » Quiz p27

Gramophone Artist of the Year 2011

Name your favourite for this year's Gramophone Awards



Nelsons



Dudamel



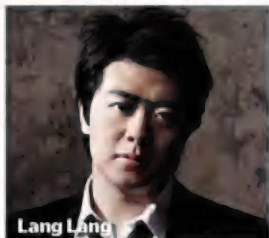
Fischer



Savall



Uchida



Lang Lang



Balsom



Ibragimova



Kaufmann



The Berlin Phil

Gramophone's critics have already been engaged for some months in the rigorous judging process by which these most prestigious classical prizes are allotted. But, as tradition dictates, one of the highest-profile awards – Artist of the Year – is decided not by our reviewers but by you.

So who in 2011 will you choose as the musician who has done the most to deserve special attention? The short list starts with “next big thing” conductor **Andris Nelsons**. He's produced a series of fine recordings, and continues to uphold the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's world-class reputation.

Talking of conductors, no list this year would be complete without a maestro whose outreach work in LA and beyond has inspired

the world – **Gustavo Dudamel**. His music-making has had a raw excitement about it to recall past superstars. Completing our conductors trio is **Iván Fischer**, whose recordings have been among the highlights of this year and previously. **Jordi Savall**, a fine conductor and viol master, continues to turn out immaculately researched, presented and played musical surveys in this, his 70th year.

Mitsuko Uchida is a force-of-life pianist. Schumann has been her recorded composer of choice this past year, but she remains an ambassador of all that is good about music. Another, younger ambassador is **Lang Lang**, indefatigably travelling the globe to work with children and at the same time to perform with the world's great orchestras.

It's not often that a trumpeter is at the forefront of classical musicians, but **Alison Balsom** has certainly managed that in a year of resounding achievement as well as widespread public acclaim. Another youngster, **Alina Ibragimova**, has great reviews wherever she aims her bow. And tenor **Jonas Kaufmann** has confirmed his move from talented newcomer to major artist.

Finally, an ensemble. The **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** has maintained its stature as one of the world's finest for decades, and has now added to its audience with its Digital Concert Hall.

To vote, visit www.gramophone.co.uk no later than August 31, where you'll also find a special offer, in association with iTunes.



Ludovic Morlot has been named the next chief conductor of Belgium's national opera house, La Monnaie/De Munt. He will take over the musical reigns from January 2012 on a five-year contract, three years since the post was left vacant by Kazushi Ono. Morlot also becomes music director of the Seattle Symphony in September.



Sir Neville Marriner is to be honorary conductor of the new I, Culture Orchestra, which will bring together musicians from Eastern European states to encourage cultural understanding. New music specialist **Pavel Kotla** is the artistic director. The initiative celebrates Poland's EU presidency.

Robin Ticciati to take over Glyndebourne



Robin Ticciati:
Glyndebourne's
next music director

Only weeks after *Gramophone* named him as one of the 10 new conductors "on the verge of greatness", Robin Ticciati has been announced as the next music director of the Glyndebourne Festival. The 27-year-old, a protégé of Sir Colin Davis, will succeed Vladimir Jurowski in January 2014.

That year will also mark the 10th anniversary of his Glyndebourne debut, when he was assistant conductor for Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* for Glyndebourne On Tour. Ticciati has been nurtured by the company over the years, and in 2007 took over the festival's touring arm. He is also principal conductor of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and principal guest conductor of the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra.

"None of us will forget the excitement when, as a 21-year-old assistant conductor on *Die Zauberflöte* in 2004, Robin Ticciati stood in the pit at Glyndebourne for the first time and conducted the Overture," said general director David Pickard. "Those who were present at this rehearsal were in no doubt of his exceptional talent."

GRAMOPHONE TALKS TO...

Khatia Buniatishvili

The Georgian pianist on her all-Liszt debut solo album

Why devote an entire album to Liszt?

When I was 10, I played his *Tarantella* on stage. It was the first time I felt like I was an artist, not just a student. Liszt's music has this presence which means you need to share it with others. Playing his music, you have this freedom, this sense that you can do what you want. Whatever mood you're in, you can find it in his music – it has everything.

How challenging is the B minor Sonata?

Technically it's very difficult and you have to be in good shape, but that was never a problem for me. Of course you need to do the work but I learnt it when I was 15 and I'm 24 now so it feels very natural to me. The lack of structure in this piece doesn't matter. There may be only one movement but within that there are many different movements, different characters...I wanted to express Liszt and all the aspects of his colourful life on this album and this work is the perfect example.

How reckless can you be with Liszt?

Liszt himself was an improviser and, in fact, in that period most people were improvising. But even with his *Hungarian Dances*, his music is structured. And with the B minor Sonata, although it was an innovation to write a sonata in one movement, you can still hear the theme, the exposition, the development...



Liszt was a very intellectual composer, too. So freedom is beautiful but you need a framework. You can paint a beautiful picture if you have a frame but without it, it's nothing.

Why include a Bach transcription?

Transcriptions were a big part of Liszt's repertoire, which shows what a generous musician he was. Compared to playing original Bach, Liszt's Bach allows you to stay a pianist. But that's the only thing that's changed. It's a beautiful transcription.

The Liszt album is reviewed on page 70

TAKING NOTE

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY...

The Guardian

Beached, Opera North's new community opera, came to a halt shortly before its July premiere in a "bitter row over a character's sexuality". The work by composer Harvey Brough, with a libretto by *Billy Elliot*

writer Lee Hall, stars hundreds of schoolchildren. Although rehearsals had been underway for six months, the main primary school involved threatened to "pull out nearly 300 children" weeks before the debut over "age-inappropriate" issues and lines such as "I'm queer", sung by the work's main character, a gay, retired painter. However,

the issues were subsequently resolved and the project saved.
www.guardian.co.uk

BBC News

Master of the Queen's Music, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, has called for audience members who use mobile phones during performances to be fined. The composer was "really upset"

when two concerts he attended recently in Orkney were marred by phones ringing. "It's becoming such a plague that one has to say something," he said. "It's very unfair on the players particularly."
www.bbc.co.uk/news



The New York Philharmonic under **Alan Gilbert** will record Carl Nielsen's complete symphonies and instrumental concertos for Dacapo Records. The first disc will be issued in autumn 2012, with the final instalment appearing in 2015, the 150th anniversary of the Danish composer's birth. For more on Nielsen, turn to our feature on page 42.



The London 2012 Olympic celebrations continue with the large-scale launch of **Music Nation**, a weekend of live events taking place across the UK in March. Part of the BBC's Cultural Olympiad, the events will involve more than 25,000 amateurs and professionals – including the five BBC orchestras – in 45 locations. Over 65,000 tickets will be available.



GALLERY VIEW



Music in a wasteland

Classical music has been played in some unlikely places, many of them chronicled on this page - from piano performed at a mountain peak to violin played in the sky. But it is surely when this art form reaches those who don't

usually come into contact with it that it is at its most immediately moving.

In this picture, 37-year-old Josephine Mpongo is transported away from the grime, dirt, heat and noise. She plays cello for the Kimbanguiste

Symphony Orchestra in Kinshasa, capital of the DR of the Congo. Do those who walk by on the other side of her makeshift fence hear her? Are their lives made that little bit better because of it? One hopes. And it is a picture of hope.



Stéphane Denève has been named as the new principal conductor of the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra from 2011-12. The Frenchman, who concludes his tenure as the Royal Scottish National Orchestra's music director after the 2011-12 season, will include works of Ravel and Strauss, plus Lindburg's 2006 Violin Concerto in his first concert as principal conductor in Stuttgart.



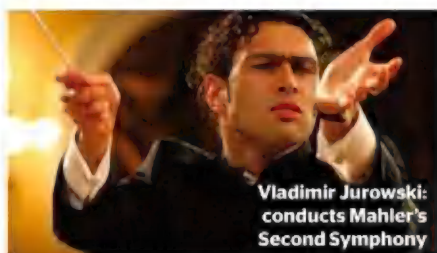
The Australian World Orchestra performed its inaugural concert at the Sydney Opera House in August. Australian musicians from around the world, representing 45 different orchestras including the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics, joined local musicians under the baton of AWO director **Alexander Briger**.

The Specialist Classical Chart

The UK's best-selling pure classical releases

OFFICIAL charts company *Compiled in association with the BPI by The Official Charts Company*

- 1 (1) **'Miloš - The Guitar'**
Miloš Karadaglić DG
- 2 (New) **'Notte Illuminata'**
Andrea Bocelli Decca
- 3 (New) **Mahler - Symphony No 2**
London PO & Choir / Jurowski LPO
- 4 (10) **Rachmaninov - Piano Concertos Nos 1 & 4** Trpčeski; RLPO / Petrenko Avie
- 5 (New) **Berlioz - Les nuits d'été**
Hunt Lieberman Philharmonia Baroque
- 6 (4) **Beethoven - Diabelli Variations**
Paul Lewis Harmonia Mundi
- 7 (2) **Beethoven - Fidelio**
Stemme; Lucerne FO / Abbado Decca
- 8 (5) **Elgar - Piano Quintet, String Quartet**
Goldner String Quartet; Lane Hyperion
- 9 (17) **Borodin - Symphonies Nos 1-3**
Seattle SO / Schwarz Naxos
- 10 (New) **'Beyond All Mortal Dreams'**
Trinity College Cambridge Choir Hyperion



Vladimir Jurowski:
conducts Mahler's
Second Symphony

Chart for week ending July 9, 2011
(previous week's position in brackets).

Log on to www.gramophone.co.uk for weekly updates of the chart, along with reviews of many of the featured recordings.

© The Official Charts Company 2011

Palm Beach Opera artistic director **Bruno Aprea** has renewed his contract to the end of the 2013-14 season. The pianist and conductor has held the position since 2005. Aprea has "elevated the artistic and production standards, and has become the audience favourite greeted by rousing applause every time he enters the pit," said general director Daniel Biaggi.

GRAMOPHONE TALKS TO...

Nico Muhly

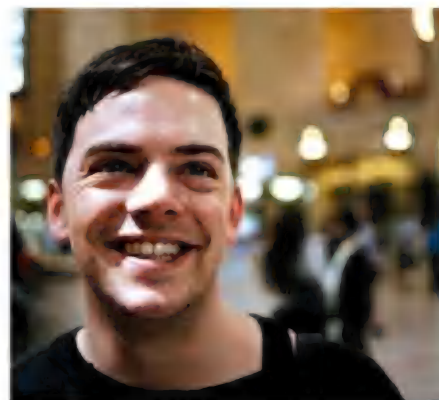
The composer on his new chamber orchestra album featuring a concerto for electric violin

What made you decide to write a concerto for the electric violin?

I got a commission from the Aurora Orchestra to write the work and I accepted with pleasure. The compositional process was really a collaboration between me and violinist Tom Gould. He had just bought a six-string electric violin made by John Jordan, and he helped me to learn about it as he was learning himself. The instrument has the ability to be amplified, looped and distorted inside an acoustic context, which means that you can treat it acoustically and electronically at the same time. One of the things we worked on was developing for the piece a kind of performance practice, including the way Tom uses vibrato and speed, and this actually ended up sounding very old-fashioned. Both the orchestra and Tom did a wonderful job of claiming the work and owning it with natural and individual interpretative gestures.

How does the title of the concerto, *Seeing is Believing*, relate to the work?

It's a poetic and abstract title, as only the best ones are. What I was aiming for was the sensation of looking at a series of dots – stars in the night sky – and how the eye makes patterns and constellations from these. We tend to draw lines between objects that aren't really connected, and for me this



is similar to the way that harmony works. In contemporary music you can outline a harmony without having to articulate it.

How are the works linked on this album?

The album represents everything I have written for chamber orchestra. All the works bear a resemblance to early music, which is why the Byrd and Gibbons arrangements sit so well alongside them. *Seeing is Believing* relates to medieval music of the seers, while *By All Means* is obsessed with cross-relations – major and minor settings going back and forth – which is also common in early works. **'Seeing is Believing' is reviewed on page 58**

Paul McCreech launches his own label

Conductor Paul McCreech has launched his own record label, which will issue recordings by his ensemble the Gabrieli Consort and Players, and from the Wratistavia Cantans Festival, of which he is artistic director.

Called Winged Lion, the label will specialise in Renaissance and Baroque repertoire, as well as large-scale

19th- and 20th-century oratorios, including, on the near horizon, Howells's Requiem. It will be distributed and manufactured by Signum Classics.

The first release, due in September, will be a recording of Berlioz's *Grande messe des morts*, which draws on forces of 400 musicians. This will be followed by Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.



Dame Emma Kirkby was awarded the Queen's Medal for Music at Buckingham Palace in June, watched by Master of The Queen's Music, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. The medal rewards an individual who has been a major influence on the musical life of the UK. The first recipient in 2005 was Sir Charles Mackerras.



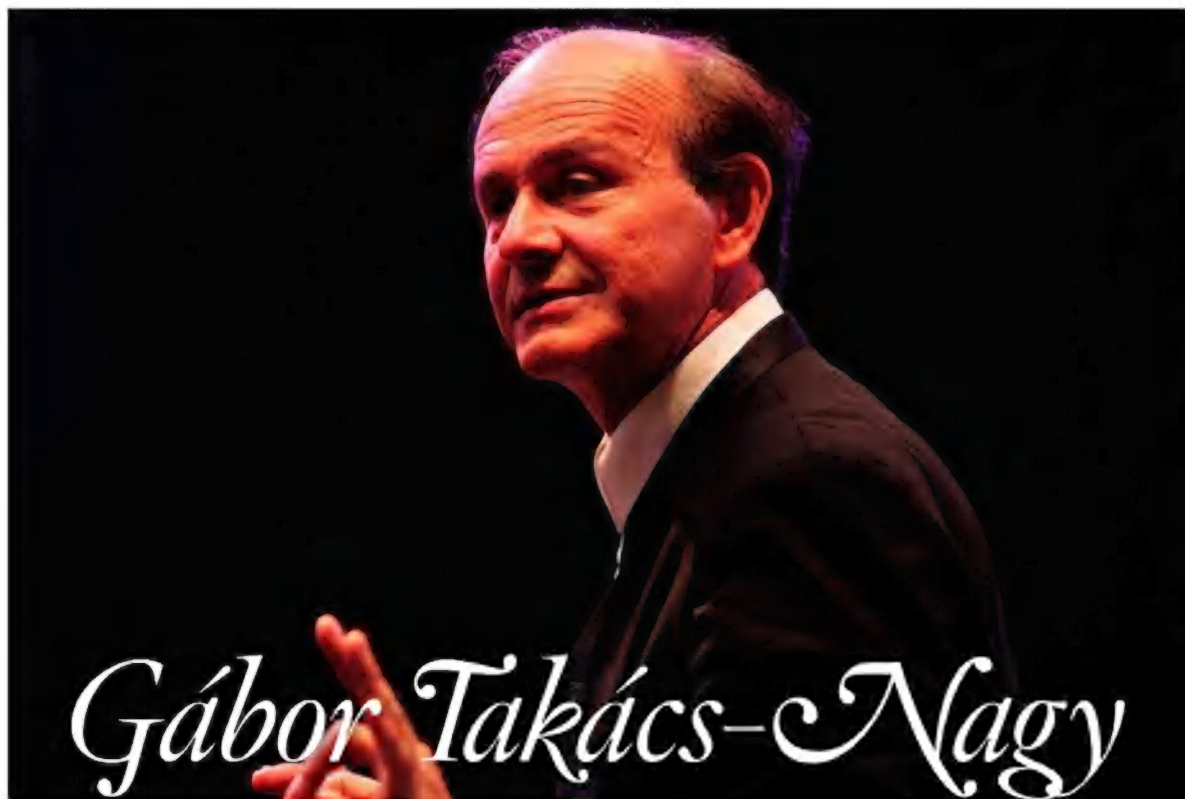
AP
AUDEMARS PIGUET
Le maître de l'horlogerie depuis 1875



JULES AUDEMARS

CHRONOGRAPH

A CONVERSATION WITH...



The eminent violinist-turned-conductor is on a mission in Manchester. And, he tells **Rachel Pugh**, the city's sporting history is entirely apt

Gábor Takács-Nagy is a man on fire as he paces the borrowed office, making imaginary passes with his feet and sweeps with his arms to illustrate his belief that music and football are part of the same beautiful game. This is, after all, Manchester. The lithe Hungarian musician, famed as former leader of the illustrious Takács Quartet, is talking of his excitement at taking up this autumn his appointment as principal conductor and music director of Manchester Camerata. But he is also a football fan.

"Music and football are so similar," says the Manchester United supporter. "It is down to who has the ball – or the tune – and the others have to listen to know who that is and anticipate the action. With the best football teams and the best chamber musicians, the individuals in the group make the others around them into better players collectively. This is my dream for Manchester Camerata."

Taking over as conductor, hard on the heels of Douglas Boyd (a Crystal Palace supporter), Takács-Nagy's first recording with the chamber orchestra comes out online on August 30. It features Prokofiev's *Classical* Symphony and Tchaikovsky's *Rococo* Variations. Manchester Camerata has plans to issue it with additional material as a full CD, but in order to give Takács-Nagy some time to get used to the orchestra, Boyd's recordings of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and the remaining symphonies of his Beethoven Cycle will be released first on Avie.

Meanwhile, Geneva-based Takács-Nagy is weaving himself into Manchester's musical life with a parallel appointment as international chair of chamber music at the RNCM. He is also chief conductor and artistic director of the MAV Symphony Orchestra in Budapest and principal guest conductor of the Budapest Festival Orchestra. He

acknowledges the debt his musical career owes to the beautiful game. His parents would encourage the eight-year-old admirer of George Best to practise his violin for several hours a day, with the threat that, otherwise, they would not allow him to watch the Hungarian league's Sunday game. The Takács Quartet itself came about through a meeting between Takács-Nagy and another violinist at a football game organised by one of his professors at the Franz Liszt Academy.

His wife, Lesley, was born in Burnley, which gives him an immediate emotional passport to the North of England, but the Hungarian is clearly establishing his own musical roots in the UK's second city with the Camerata. "The orchestra understands me," he smiles. "I feel a special emotional and spiritual bond."

He is inspired, he says, by recordings of his four conducting heroes – Wilhelm Furtwängler, Carlos Kleiber, Ferenc Fricsay and Georg Solti. The last was rehearsing Mozart with the Takács members when he leant over and said, "Gabor, you would make a good conductor – you have a clear and natural body language." Those words set Takács-Nagy thinking.

Now he is in full flow and the Camerata is poised for a culture shift – from Boyd's Harmoncourt-influenced style to the new era of a Hungarian master chamber musician. Yet the relationship did not instantly gel. At their first concert in 2010, some players found the change too extreme, but by the next day they had found the magic common ground.

"I feel an orchestra has to be approached in the same way as a string quartet," says Takács-Nagy. "You have to know your role. The biggest challenge is to make the orchestra listen." ●

Avie releases the Prokofiev and Tchaikovsky recordings exclusively on iTunes on August 30; from September 13, they will be available on other websites

UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC LAUSANNE

THREE SITES - ONE UNIVERSITY
CLASSICAL & JAZZ
BACHELOR > MASTER
MASTERCLASSES

WITH CHRISTA LUDWIG, IVRY GITLIS, EMMANUEL PAHUD, ETC.

WWW.HEMU.CH

Daniel Müller-Schott

The German cellist finds himself attracted to the music of Britain – and of Britten

There is always time to reflect after concerts and now, travelling the long way back to

Europe, I realise that a variety of British music has been on my agenda over the past months, with works by Elgar and Walton and a special focus on Benjamin Britten. It was truly rewarding to be playing and recording the Solo Cello Suites by Britten as a cycle, something that has been a deep wish for many years. And it felt very good to work again with my inspiring recording team in Munich – after our first collaboration in the year 2000 on the Six Solo Cello Suites by Johann Sebastian Bach – to now be exploring the modern counterpart of the cello solo repertoire. This solo recording will be followed by Britten's Cello Symphony – coupled with Prokofiev's *Sinfonia concertante* together with the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne and Jukka-Pekka Saraste – to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the composer in the year 2013.

I still remember my first encounter with Britten's music, which took place at a performance of his opera *Peter Grimes* at the Munich State Opera when I was about 14 years old. Britten's highly characteristic and profoundly penetrating musical language has exerted a great fascination on me ever since. I vividly remember that I began to work in detail on the Cello Suites when I had the chance to spend one year studying with their dedicatee, the great Mstislav Rostropovich.



'The cello's limitations are completely subverted by Britten's imagination'

"Slava" introduced me to Britten's music with all his typical vitality, and encouraged me to get to know the whole of the composer's output. He often used to say that as the interpreter one must not only be "the composer's ambassador" but should try above all to "anticipate the moment of the work and re-live that moment in all its immediacy". That, of course, is a lifelong challenge, and one tries again and again to come closer to that goal, to reach that particular freedom in the interpretation of music. For me, there have been few other types of repertoire in which I have been able to feel this challenge as compellingly as in Britten's Cello Suites. The apparent limitations of the cello – with only four strings at its disposal –

are completely subverted by Britten's imagination. He gave the instrument a new and unprecedented level of light and shade, bringing to it not only ghostly musical figures but also deeply moving, spiritual moments of tremendous inwardness.

The First Suite reflects

Britten's love of Baroque forms, the theme of its *Canto* suggesting an impassioned desire to return to that lost world, whereas the Second Suite is first and foremost an example of its composer's explosive intellect. His ability to create interrelationships here – in the *Fuga* of the second movement and the *Ciaccona* of the final movement, for example – and to bring an incomparable logic to

the interchangeability of the voices must surely place these works among the most inspired ever to have been written for the cello. Today we know that Britten was particularly keen to write a series of works to stand alongside Bach's Six Solo Cello Suites. It is sad that he was never able to realise an idea that was especially close to his heart. When he travelled to Moscow in 1971 he was already gravely ill, having just finished his Third and final Suite as a present for his hosts Mstislav Rostropovich and Dmitri Shostakovich. The work's combination of variations on somber themes that are associated with grief – which Britten borrowed from Tchaikovsky's arrangements of Russian folksongs together with the Russian Orthodox hymn for the departed – constitutes his melancholy legacy.

For me, there is also a link here with Shostakovich's Second Cello Concerto, which likewise explores the border area between life and death. This Third Suite received its first performance in 1974, two years before Britten's death. If Rostropovich never made a commercial recording of it, this is no doubt due to the great Russian cellist's sadness and admiration for his English friend. We can only be grateful for this friendship and for Britten's contribution to the cello repertoire, a contribution seized on by later generations of cellists. ●

Daniel Müller-Schott's recording of Benjamin Britten's Cello Suites on Orfeo (C835111a) will be reviewed in the October issue

Proud principal partner of Southbank Sinfonia

A private bank unlike any other. A record
of dynamic growth. Built on giving clients
the service they expect and deserve.



Photo: Deryck Jones

Practitioners of the craft of private banking



EFG International's global family of private banking businesses operates in over 50 locations in 30 countries. These include Zurich, Geneva, London, Paris, Monaco, Luxembourg, Stockholm, New York, Miami, Toronto, The Bahamas, Dubai, Hong Kong and Singapore. www.efginternational.com

ONE TO WATCH


Rachel Kolly d'Alba

A Swiss violinist is grabbing attention with a high-profile recording contract

She may be a young artist, but at 30 the rather grandly named Swiss violinist Rachel Kolly d'Alba is already artistic director of her own chamber music series in Montreux. If the suggestion were to be made that this is a musician whose progress is being charted along some interesting musical roads, few would be likely to disagree. After all, among her credits is a new recording contract with Warner Classics & Jazz, as well as some impressive competition wins.

Of her first recording, an Ysaÿe survey, *The Times* newspaper enthused: "D'Alba's playing is terribly exciting... She's always febrile and gung-ho, and time and again my jaw dropped at the passionate skill of her playing." Then there's the spectacular sound of her 1732 Stradivarius, donated by a French collector and surely a match for her playing style. Yet she has managed to pass many reviewers by.

She can expect that to change with her follow-up CD for Warner, out this autumn. If the Ysaÿe was a calling card, her new disc of works by Saint-Saëns, Chausson, Ravel and more Ysaÿe should garner more attention. The label seems confident that it will, and has already announced her next recording – an album of Bernstein, Gershwin and Waxman.

If you want to "try before you buy", Kolly d'Alba is spending a portion of this year touring the new CD programme. Other concerts will coincide with the next release – there are plenty of Bernstein *Serenades*, Waxman *Carmen Fantasies* and Gershwin *Porgy and Bess Fantasies* coming, if you're lucky, to a concert hall near you... 

Name Rachel Kolly d'Alba
Age 30

Plans Two new recordings for Warner Classics & Jazz and a French tour at the end of 2011, followed by Italy in 2012. There is also a London recital planned for October 2011; visit www.racheldalba.com for more information



PHOTOGRAPHY: ERIC RICHMOND

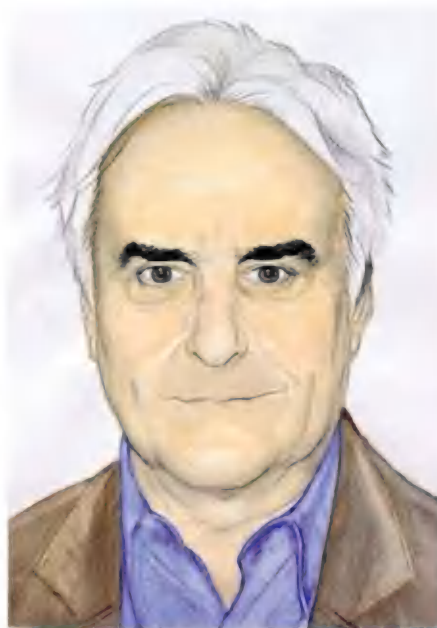
Richard Eyre

In his last column, on the merits and pitfalls of music criticism

I hope it doesn't seem ungracious, after a year of writing for this magazine, to say that I don't read much writing about music. For me, writing about music belongs to the same category as writing about the theatre: it's like writing on water. A friend of mine was unwise enough to ask Paul Scofield if he'd like to give a lecture about acting. This was his reply: "I have found that an actor's work has life and interest only in its execution. It seems to wither away in discussion and become empty theoretical and insubstantial. It has no rules (except perhaps audibility). With every play and every playwright the actor starts from scratch, as if he or she knows nothing and proceeds to learn afresh every time, growing with the relationships of the characters and the insights of the writer. When the play has finished its run he's empty until the next time. And it's the emptiness which is, I find, apparent in any discussion of theatre work." And so it is – for me – about music. Put another way by the dancer, Anna Pavlova: "If I could describe it, why would I dance it?"

Nevertheless I confess to being drawn to music criticism in a way that I'm not to theatre criticism – partly perhaps because I know so much more about the theatre and find so much writing about it so off the mark that it's comparable to a music critic describing a waltz as a rumba. And partly perhaps because I'm not in the musical firing line. Schadenfreude is a very unattractive tendency but I find an allure in reading the sort of slash and burn criticism that dismisses composers, players and conductors as if they were items on a gourmet menu. Glenn Gould described Mozart as a bad composer, a master of clichés, self parody and "empty theatrical gestures" – along with Chopin, Schumann, Liszt and Debussy. Edward Said, who comes near more often than most to describing the effect of listening to live music, wrote that by giving up the concert hall Gould converted himself from "virtuoso to intellectual".

Bernard Shaw, who wrote music criticism under the pseudonym Corno di Bassetto, dismissed Rossini and Brahms and wrote of Schubert's *Unfinished* Symphony that it "ought to have been uncommenced". He did, however, foresee that Puccini's reputation would outlive all his rivals' and observed of Mozart, brilliantly, that he "came at the end of a development, not at the beginning of one. In art the highest success is to be the last of your race, not the first. Anybody,



'Like the advice of back-seat drivers, most criticism is the articulation of subjective opinion, or elevated prejudice'

almost, can make a beginning: the difficulty is to make an end – to do what cannot be bettered."

Much music criticism is a form of book-keeping: recordings and performances catalogued with the doggedly joyless pedantry of armchair cricketers pouring over their *Wisdens*, or trainspotters marking off another 4-6-4 Atlantic Class in a siding in Darlington. A critic is a man who knows the way but can't drive the car, said the theatre critic Kenneth Tynan and, like the advice of back-seat drivers, most criticism is the articulation of subjective opinion, or, to put it more bluntly, elevated (and sometimes educated) prejudice.

I wouldn't accuse the journalist and critic Norman Lebrecht of being fair-minded but then no one could accuse him of not being entertaining. Take for instance his comment on a recent Deutsche Grammophon recording: "DG fails here even to make clear whether the recording is live or a studio performance. An executive producer is named. He ought to be locked in a small room with an empty

revolver, or sent on holiday for a very long while." Lebrecht is at his most entertainingly caustic as the scourge of the maestro cult – in particular the "old tyrant" Herbert von Karajan, who he blames for creating the template for classical music as corporate entertainment at prohibitively priced festivals or, as the incomparable writer Alex Ross puts it, "a reliable conduit for consoling beauty – a kind of spa treatment for tired souls".

I'm finishing writing about music: this will be my last column in this magazine. I've found it enjoyable, but the truth is that writing about music – or at least the experience of listening to music – is as difficult as writing about sex. Like music, sex can be described in a forensically explicit way with the geography of limbs and exchange of bodily fluids catalogued with the precision of a musicologist's annotations

on a score. The same adjectives can recur as often in music criticism as in sex scenes – "shudderingly beautiful", "achingly sad", "stunningly articulated", "transcendently thrilling" – but get us no closer to describing feelings than coy euphemisms or flower and animal metaphors. But perhaps that's because music, like sex, doesn't have to have a point: that is its point. Music is. With good music, you have only to listen to it and be grateful. ☺



George Bernard Shaw - sometime music critic

“When Anne-Sophie Mutter plays, you listen”

The Times

August 23rd, 2011 is Anne-Sophie Mutter's
35th anniversary on stage.

Deutsche Grammophon have celebrated this milestone by creating
a stunning, limited-edition boxed set.

The set contains all of her Deutsche Grammophon recordings on
38 CDs, 2 bonus CDs and a 288-page hardback full colour book with
more than 150 photographs.

Bonus discs include previously *unreleased recordings* from her youth,
chamber music with Lambert Orkis, the Lutosławski Memorial
Concert and the Concerto André Previn composed for her.



ANNE-SOPHIE MUTTER
ASM35 - The Complete Musician
Cat: 477 946 4 • 40 x CD

Available exclusively at:
www.deutschegrammophon.com





MARIINSKY

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR

DONIZETTI
NATALIE DESSAY, PIOTR BECZALA
ILYA BANNIK, VLADISLAV SULIMSKY
VALERY GERGIEV MARIINSKY ORCHESTRA & CHORUS

NATALIE DESSAY AND PIOTR BECZALA
STAR IN A SENSATIONAL NEW RECORDING
OF DONIZETTI'S MASTERPIECE
CONDUCTED BY VALERY GERGIEV

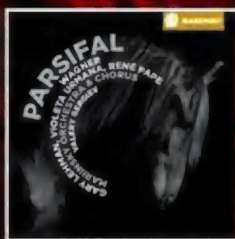
2SACD MAR0512



DONIZETTI LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR
NATALIE DESSAY, PIOTR BECZALA
VLADISLAV SULIMSKY

AVAILABLE ON 2 SUPER AUDIO CDS
(COMPATIBLE WITH ALL CD
PLAYERS) FROM 25 JULY

4SACD MAR0508



WAGNER PARSIFAL
GARY LEHMAN, VIOLETA URMANA
RENE PAPE

DISC OF THE MONTH
BBC Music Magazine (UK)

CDS OF THE YEAR *New York Times* (US)

CDS OF THE YEAR
Los Angeles Times (US)

EDITOR'S CHOICE *Gramophone* (UK)

2SACD MAR0501



SHOSTAKOVICH THE NOSE
VLADISLAV SULIMSKY
ALEXEI TANOVITSKI, ANDREI POPOV

BEST OPERA *Edison Awards* (Netherlands)

ORPHÉE D'OR (France)

CAECILIA AWARD (Belgium)

DISC OF THE MONTH
BBC Music Magazine (UK)

DISC OF THE MONTH
Opera Magazine (UK)

AVAILABLE ON SACD OR DOWNLOAD FROM ALL GOOD STORES.
ALTERNATIVELY VISIT MARIINSKYLABEL.COM
Released in association with LSO Live. Distributed by *harmonia mundi UK*

BIOGRAPHY OF AN INSTRUMENT

The Handel Organ at St Lawrence, Little Stanmore

Andrew Mellor visits a 'new' historic organ

On the edge of suburban north London, a few minutes' walk past a petrol station and a kebab shop from Stanmore tube station, there's a strange and seemingly misplaced treasure trove of Baroque art. Posterity has positioned the church of St Lawrence by the edge of a nondescript estate by a busy road and in the shadow of the overhead tube line. Nothing hints at what's contained within.

Adorning the church's interior is a series of paintings by the in-crowd of early-18th-century art. Antonio Bellucci, Louis Laguerre and Francesco Sleter were despatched to St Lawrence by the first Duke of Chandos to decorate the refashioned nave; all three were hanging around north London in 1715, having just topped out the Duke's spectacular mansion up the road at Cannons.

The centrepiece of the church's new interior was an organ, finished in 1716 by Gerard Smith and encased within bespoke woodwork by Grinling Gibbons. The Duke was keen to get the instrument just right; in 1717 he had a new musician-in-residence on the way from Italy who had a reputation for perfectionism. George Frideric Handel didn't disappoint. In the ensuing two-year preface to his love affair with central London, the composer penned a number of gems at Cannons and would certainly have played the Duke's new instrument.

The "Handel Organ" still attracts as many pilgrims to St Lawrence as the paintings do. Perhaps it's that eponymous title that draws them here. And therein lies the rub. Just as Trigger proudly claimed to have used the same broom for 20 years in *Only Fools and Horses* – only changing the head 17 times and the handle 14 times – you have to add a certain caveat to the "Handel Organ" label. Like the fact, for example, that the windchests, console, action and most of the pipework have since been replaced. All that remains is Gibbons's casework and a handful of Smith's pipes.

Handel's organ, then? Well, perhaps a little more so these days. The Goetze & Gwynn firm is the most recent to have had a go at the instrument, and the results of its 1994 rebuild, those summarised above, bring us as near as possible to the spanking new machine inaugurated in 1716. Handel's technique must have been ship-shape: the narrowness of the keys on both the manuals and pedalboard are treacherous for all but the most honed of techniques.

Sonically, though, it's a pure delight. The mechanical action rattles away behind brightly but subtly voiced stops including particularly fine diapasons on the Great division, complete with a delicious wind "bite". Stylish enough, too, for Paul Nicholson's recording of Handel's concertos (Hyperion), described in these pages as "brightly glittering".



'Treacherous for all but the most honed of techniques'

QUIZ

Who am I?

Pit your wits against Gramophone



Béla Bartók:
I worshipped
him as a student

The rural estate where I grew up shares a name with a 20th-century French composer and conductor, as well as with the made-up name used as a code word in the 1997 film *LA Confidential*. The comparisons are apt, as I spent my career in classical music as well as in the movies.

My mother was a classmate of Bartók. I worshipped the composer and as a student myself would collect Hungarian folk tunes. Yet my attempts to introduce the music of Bartók and Kodály to my school, as the real Hungarian national music, led to the headmaster scolding me for being "subversive".

My own first public performance was a movement from a Mozart violin concerto - I was

dressed as Mozart and I also led a children's orchestra in Leopold Mozart's *Toy Symphony*.

Although it was the Swiss composer Arthur Honegger who introduced me to the film world, it was a fellow Hungarian who produced much of my early work and took me to Hollywood.

In Rome for the shooting of what became the most famous film I worked on, a crucial scene featuring a roof tile had to be reshoot because I told the director I could use more

time to express a character's feelings in music. Some at the film studio hadn't wanted me to go to Rome at all, and after this incident one angry executive told me that my presence had cost them \$10,000 - the amount it had cost to reshoot the scene.



LA Confidential: contains
a link to where I grew up

HOW TO ENTER

Visit www.gramophone.co.uk/win - you will need to be registered and logged in to www.gramophone.co.uk. Entries close at 2pm on Wednesday October 5, 2011. The prize is a selection of classical CDs. Open to website users aged 18 or over. No cash alternative. Prizes are non-transferable. Only one entry per person. For full terms and conditions, visit www.gramophone.co.uk

JUNE ISSUE WINNER The mystery guitar-maker was **Antonio Torres**.

The first correct answer came from Adrian Thorpe, from Sherborne, UK, who wins a selection of CDs.

THE NEW ALBUM FROM LANG LANG LISZT MY PIANO HERO



**"The hottest artist on the
classical music planet"**

The New York Times

Lang Lang's new album is devoted to the music of Franz Liszt, the original 'piano hero' and includes his Piano Concerto No.1, which Lang Lang will be performing at the Last Night Of The Proms on 10th September 2011

ALSO AVAILABLE



Live In Vienna - Deluxe Special Edition 2CD
DVD - 88697724149 • Blu-Ray - 88697719029

Available at

hmv
hmv.com

www.langlang.com



FREE

When you
subscribe to
GRAMOPHONE



BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES BOX-SET



**Subscribe to Gramophone
this month and receive a free
Beethoven Symphonies box-set.**

This collection, performed by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra & Edinburgh Festival Chorus and conducted by Charles Mackerras includes all nine Symphonies within a set of 5 CDs.

SAVE 18%
when you pay
by Direct Debit

ORDER NOW AT themagazineshop.com/GMCD/M0911P
OR CALL 08456 777 823



- **FREE** Beethoven Symphonies 5-CD box-set
- **SAVE** 18% on the shop price when you pay by Direct Debit
- **FREE** delivery direct to your door
- Flexible payments - choose the method to suit you
- Never miss an issue of the world's best classical music reviews magazine
- **Plus** exclusive subscriber-only offers and discounts

Please have your card details ready and quote the promotional code **M0911P**. Offer ends September 9, 2011.



Order form

- ☒ **YES**, please start my subscription to *Gramophone* and send me my free Beethoven Symphonies box-set

This subscription is: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

YOUR DETAILS (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE - MUST BE COMPLETED)

Title Name Surname

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Mobile

DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT OPTION £22.50 EVERY 6 ISSUES - SAVE 18%

- ☐ I will pay £22.50 every six issues by Direct Debit

To the bank manager:
Bank/Building society

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Branch sort code Bank/Building Society account number

Reference number (for office use only)

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account. **Instruction to your Bank or Building Society:** Please pay Haymarket Media Group Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assumed by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may stay with Haymarket Media Group and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.



OTHER PAYMENT OPTIONS 13 ISSUES FOR £59.80

- ☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to Haymarket Media Group for £ _____
- ☐ Please debit my: Mastercard/VISA/Amex/Maestro/Diners for the amount £ _____

Card No.

Valid from Expiry date

Issue no. (Maestro only)

Signature Date

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:
Gramophone, FREEPOST RSBZ-GBES-RRKB,
PO Box 326, Sittingbourne, ME9 8FA
Code M0911P

Terms and conditions: This offer is open to UK residents only. Offer ends September 9th, 2011. Overseas rates are available on +44 (0)1795 592 980. Please allow 35 days for delivery of your gift and first issue. The gift will be sent under separate cover from the magazine and will not be despatched until your payment has cleared. Should we run out of gifts, you will be offered an alternative gift of a similar value - there is no cash alternative. Minimum subscription term is 6 issues for Direct Debit payment and 13 issues for annual payment and is non-refundable, should you choose to cancel your subscription during your first term it will cancel on expiry. Details of the Direct Debit Guarantee are available on request. Direct Debit rates are valid for one year after which they are subject to change - should prices change we will inform you in writing. Haymarket Media Group Ltd uses a best-practice layered Privacy Policy to provide you with details about how we would like to use your personal information. The most relevant uses are detailed below. To read the full privacy policy please visit our website www.haymarket.com/privacy or call us on 08456 777 800. Please ask if you have any questions as submitting your personal information indicates your consent, for the time being, that we and our partners may contact you about products and services that will be of interest to you via post, phone, e-mail and SMS. You can opt-out at ANY time by emailing datacontroller@haymarket.com or by calling 08456 777 800

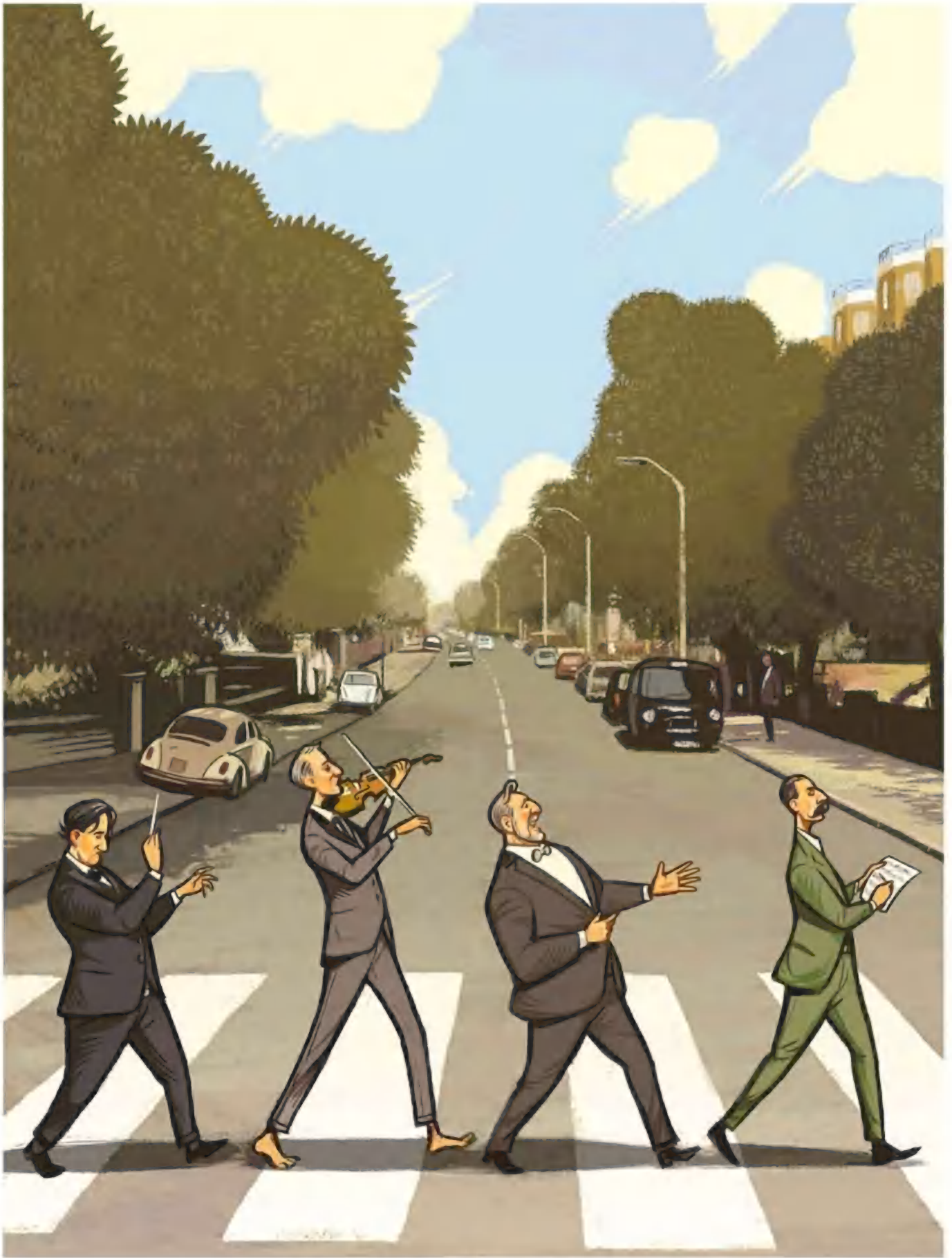


ILLUSTRATION FOR GRAMOPHONE STEPHEN COLLINS

'Walking into Abbey Road is like tracing the footsteps of the greatest recordings ever made'

Antonio Pappano

For 80 years, Abbey Road Studios has been at the heart of classical recordings. Through impressions and recollections from the people – past and present – who have created art in these iconic rooms, **Martin Cullingford** explores the studios' extraordinary history

In a different world, tourists wouldn't gather outside EMI Abbey Road Studios so that they can stride across the planet's most famous zebra crossing in homage to a quartet of Liverpoolian pop stars. Instead they'd stand on the front steps and replicate the famous photograph of two of the studio's first heroes, Yehudi Menuhin and Sir Edward Elgar, the teenage violinist holding the score of the concerto by the 75-year old composer – resplendent in Edwardian suit and walrus moustache – standing beside him. That was in 1932, 37 years before our pop pioneers stepped out for a 10-minute photo shoot and, in doing so, elevated a quiet north London street into one of the most famous addresses in the world. Thirty-seven years in which EMI's purpose-built studio had already changed recording history for ever, both in terms of technological development and the creation of some of the most treasured albums ever to grace collectors' shelves. A further third of a century on, and The Beatles have also now receded into the past to become a part of Abbey Road's ever-growing history.

IT ALL STARTED WITH ELGAR... OR DID IT?

The building that would eventually become EMI Abbey Road Studios started life in the short reign of William IV, in the 1830s, as a nine-bedroom house, with five reception rooms, two rooms for servants, a cellar for wine and a 250ft garden. Set at one end of a quiet suburban road, in the newly popular St John's Wood area, its first century was not as eventful as its second was to be, but not uncolourful either – one of its residents was Maundy Gregory, notorious for selling honours for Lloyd George.

On December 3, 1929, No 3 Abbey Road was bought by The Gramophone Company Limited. During the next two years a large studio was built over the garden, a smaller, second studio built alongside, while The Gramophone Company merged with rival Columbia to form EMI (Electric and Musical Industries Ltd). On November 12, 1931, Sir Edward Elgar stepped on to the podium in front of the assembled musicians of the London Symphony Orchestra and began conducting Abbey Road's first recording, his own "Land of Hope and Glory".

Or so we had always been told. But when a few years ago restoration engineer Andrew Walter began remastering recordings by Paul Robeson, he discovered four recordings made at Abbey Road in September 1931, when the painters were presumably still putting the finishing touches to the walls. One of them, "Rockin' Chair", was released in December that year. And so the first recording issued by Abbey Road turns out to have been made not, after all, by a

ABBEYROAD MEMORIES

'No other studio that I've ever been in has quite the gravitas of the place. One day I was recording a piece there I'd written for piano and strings and found myself all alone in the big studio, Studio One, sitting at the piano – and I felt surrounded by ghosts'

Jon Lord, rock musician and composer

Abbey Road artists past and present (L-R): Antonio Pappano, Yehudi Menuhin, Plácido Domingo and Sir Edward Elgar



Top: Sir Edward Elgar conducts the LSO in his 'Land of Hope and Glory' at the opening ceremony of Abbey Road Studios on November 12, 1931.

Above: Yehudi Menuhin and Elgar on the steps of Abbey Road in 1932, at the time of recording Elgar's Violin Concerto

tweed-suited composing knight but by a black bass-baritone and civil rights campaigner from America.

"You can always tell if it's Studio One," says Walter of a recording. Studio One is what most people think of when they talk of classical music at Abbey Road. Forty feet high, 92 feet long, it is the world's largest purpose-built recording studio, and its acoustics are widely praised by those who have worked there (though not by all: Toscanini apparently walked in, clapped his hands, decided he didn't like it and walked out again). For producer Andrew Keener (whose Abbey Road credits include Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* with Leonard Slatkin, Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Richard Hickox and the late Mozart symphonies with Jeffrey Tate), the acoustics are "very responsive, very clean, very explicit – the stereo imaging is very precise". For former EMI head of A&R and producer Stephen Johns it has "a complex acoustic that just brings a wonderful colour to everything you do there". As for artists, LSO principal horn David Pyatt, young but already a veteran of many a film score including *Star Wars* and *The Lord of the Rings*, says that "from a horn player's perspective it's pretty damn perfect". Dame Janet Baker recalls it as "resonant: it helped you make a good sound".

As for conducting there, Antonio Pappano – whose Abbey Road discography ranges from Rachmaninov to Wagner – describes it as "a very rich acoustic, but tricky. Because of its richness, the conductor has his hands full in getting musicians to really listen to each other. It feels very cinematographic, the sound swirls." He describes it as "like being in the sea; you have to let the sound continuously roll. Once you pick up on this continuous spin of the sound it's actually quite magical. You're able to achieve incredible virtuosity and fluidity and continuity of sound if you're able to let it happen."

Building an ideal acoustic is both art and experimentation. Tests have involved hanging speakers on the walls, and if you look up at the ceiling, in countertenor James Bowman's words, "It's got all these long racks of some sort of acoustic material. I always thought it was washing being hung up in someone's kitchen to dry." Back in the 1930s the studio's echo was 1.3 seconds but after much tweaking and a major refurbishment in the 1960s it settled at 2.6 seconds, which remains the reverberation today.

1930s

PABLO CASALS AND THE LEGACY OF YEHUDI MENUHIN

When I meet Walter he is working on Pablo Casals's recordings of Bach's Solo Cello Suites, made at Abbey Road and also in Paris in the late 1930s. Remastering, by experts huddled in high-tech rooms along labyrinthine corridors, is an important but less celebrated aspect of the work that goes on in Abbey Road today. The clarity and vividness that today's digital technology allows people like Walter to bring to recordings such as these, made on wax and transferred at the time on to metal discs, is astonishing. "This recording isn't dead," says Walter. "It's an alive recording. But all the people involved in it are dead – so it's just the metals, and me. It's a huge responsibility." And such responsibility brings challenges. For example, the suites recorded at Abbey Road are at modern pitch, while those recorded in Paris are lower. Is that the fault of the French transfers, or did Casals actually play it like that? After all, Casals's approach to technical precision was a little unorthodox: at an Abbey Road session, when one of his strings snapped, he simply tied a knot in it and carried on.

Walter has also remastered the 1932 Elgar Violin Concerto recording, an event captured in that famous photograph on the steps. Menuhin was to record nearly 250 works at Abbey Road, and on a later visit to the studios Walter asked him about those early recordings, and in particular why, faced with such a vast space in Studio One, the musicians would huddle in corners, or at one end. Menuhin concluded that, so relatively new was the process of recording, that it was still a natural instinct to crowd together as if round a horn, or to stand at one end of a room as if in a concert. Everything at Abbey Road, you see, has its roots in the past.

1950s

SCHWARZKOPF, WAX TO TAPE, AND THE ADVENT OF STEREO RECORDING

A young engineer called Christopher Parker is operating the tape machine for a recording of English songs by the German soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf with Gerald Moore at the piano. The producer is Walter Legge, who was to oversee many of Abbey Road's classic productions, and it was the first time Parker had met him. "During the rehearsal I was in the control room, standing near the loudspeaker," recalls Parker, "and I said to Legge,

'Do you know, I can't understand a word she's singing.' She had a very strong German accent. Legge drew sharply on his cigarette. This is what he did when he was angry. I didn't realise that Legge was married to Elisabeth Schwarzkopf – to me she was just a German singer trying to sing English."

Despite that inauspicious start, Parker was to become one of Abbey Road's most respected sound engineers. So much so that another Abbey Road remastering engineer, Ian Jones, says of him, "Christopher Parker is one of my heroes, and one of our heroes in the remastering department because of the quality of his recordings. The balance of the instruments is always where it should be and remains so for the whole recording. The sound will always be consistent, as realistic as it could be for the era. And the choice of his microphones was perfect. If it's a Chris Parker recording, generally you could put the tape on and you might not need to do much to it."

Parker had joined Abbey Road as one era was giving way to the next – wax to tape, which made editing possible for the first time. The tape they used had been developed by the German air force during the war, and, recalls Parker, "was a coated tape of oxide, covered in rust. It was full of overlap joins, which if you recorded over them gave a hiccup. So these all had to be cut out: this was one of my first jobs. At the end of the day your fingers were absolutely covered in red dust, it got over your clothes – it was a horrible job."

A few years later another development was to have a profound impact on music: stereo recording. Developed in the 1930s by EMI engineer Alan Blumlein (killed during the war), the 1950s saw stereo begin to appear in the studio. Most sessions were still mono but, as Parker recalls, "I was allowed to tag along and see what I could get out of it. I was given the gear and let loose. Legge was doing the mono balance, everything was done for the mono; I had no say whatsoever as to where things were placed or where people stood. I just had to take what I could out of it, and it's extraordinary that some of it is quite good. I was a bit of an intrusion for the mono engineer – he didn't want anyone fiddling around, putting extra mics in." Although it was Decca which actually released the first stereo records, Parker's experiments at Legge's mono sessions for Karajan's *Falstaff* and *Rosenkavalier* (both at Kingsway Hall), and subsequently released, show just how successful those first steps were.

Another of Parker's early sessions, this time in the smaller Studio Three, was of Alfred Cortot playing Schumann's *Carnaval*. "He was rather old and very short-sighted – he had these great bottle tops – and he couldn't see the extremes of the keyboard. He played *Carnaval* through once. And that was it. And it was absolutely full of wrong notes, but it's the most fantastic piece of Schumann-playing you're ever likely to hear – it's my favourite. They couldn't issue it, it's too inaccurate. But I made a copy. It's probably my most valuable recording."

It was also in this post-war era that the zebra crossing was introduced to British roads.

1960s

FROM JANET BAKER TO THE FAB FOUR

When I ask Parker which recordings he is most proud of, he suggests Janet Baker's performance, with Sir Adrian Boult conducting, of Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*. "I think I got a nice sound on her voice there," he says. A couple of weeks later, when I ask the same question of Dame Janet Baker, she chooses exactly the same. "I wasn't a Wagner singer but I agreed to do it because I love the pieces, and thought that this was not going to stress me because I didn't have to project out into the large building for an audience. Then, in the middle of these recordings – maybe the music got to me, I don't know, but somehow the quality of those sessions was indescribable to me. And even now when I listen, I can hear something on the discs of that cycle which reminds me of a feeling I had at the time. It's an indescribable feeling, somehow, when things go right. Maybe it was the temperature in the hall, maybe it was the weather, I don't know what it was, but it was an occasion when I thought 'This is really superb', and it sounded so in the box as well when we listened to the tapes. They got something magical."

ABBEY ROAD MEMORIES

'Custom-made studios of that period can't be beaten. Studio One is warm without a big echo and with very flexible sound, so the recording engineers can do what they like'

Trevor Pinnock, harpsichordist

STUDIO INSIDERS RECOMMEND...

Ten favourite Abbey Road recordings from the studios' experts



'Rockin' Chair'
Paul Robeson - The Complete EMI Sessions 1928-1939
EMI 215586-2

As Andrew Walter explains in these pages, this was actually Abbey Road's first hit – and it now appears as part of a historically important remastered set of Robeson's recordings.



Vaughan Williams - Dona nobis pacem. Sancta Civitas
Yvonne Kenny, Philip Langridge, Bryn Terfel; Choir of St Paul's Cathedral; LSO / Richard Hickox
EMI 754788-2

The sort of work that breathes wonderfully in Abbey Road's much-praised acoustics. In Langridge and Hickox it features two artists recently lost to us and much missed.



Purcell - Birthday Odes for Queen Mary
Early Music Consort of London / David Munrow
CIP 586050-2

James Bowman reveals to *Gramophone* how, in the 1970s, Studio One became home to an astonishingly fruitful revival of early music led by Munrow.



Britten - John Donne Sonnets
(Composers in Person series)
Peter Pears ten Benjamin Britten pf
EMI 029006-2

Infused throughout with a powerful emotional drive, this recording sees Britten's music delivered by the person it was written for.



Shostakovich - Symphony No 8
LSO / André Previn
EMI 509025-2

Previn's relationship with the LSO and with Abbey Road was both profound and prolific. This recording was expertly engineered by Christopher Parker.



Operetta Arias
Thomas Hampson bar
LPO / Franz Welser-Möst
EMI 358361-2

Dame Janet Baker and Angela Gheorghiu both talk about being a soloist in Abbey Road's acoustic – here another great voice demonstrates what it offers singers.



Stravinsky - Les noces
(Composers in Person series)
Soloists; BBC Chorus / Igor Stravinsky
EMI 754607-2

A fascinating composer-led recording from Abbey Road's early days – this time from 1934, when Stravinsky conducted his ballet *Les noces* in English translation.



Mendelssohn - Violin Concerto
Jascha Heifetz vn
RPO / Sir Thomas Beecham
EMI 217312-2

An early (1949) tape and one which shows that this pioneering era for Abbey Road was already producing rich artistic artefacts.



Rimsky Korsakov - Sheherazade
LPO/ Jansons
EMI 350824-2

"One of EMI's finest," said *Gramophone* at the time, "vivid and immediate with a thrillingly wide dynamic range."



'Russian Opera Arias and Songs'
Boris Christoff bass
EMI 392054-2

A young Christoff caught in the most beautiful of voice, in roles he was to make his own onstage.

CONTRIBUTING PANEL:

JONATHAN ALLEN, ANDREW WALTER, IAN JONES,
SIMON KILN (ABBEY ROAD ENGINEERS),
ANDREW KEENER (PRODUCER)



Vladimir Ashkenazy: one of many leading conductors to record at Abbey Road

ABBEY ROAD MEMORIES

'A film of Britten's Serenade I was involved in had just been broadcast. I was recording at Abbey Road and bumped into Paul McCartney on the stairs. His first words were, "Didn't I see you on the telly last night?" Role reversal – and bow!'

Ian Bostridge, tenor

Before our narrative passes through The Beatles' era, it would be inaccurate not to pause for a moment and consider the impact the Fab Four had on Abbey Road. Baker recalls that "it produced the most amazing attention from their fans. There was a buzz about the building which was quite extraordinary. Of course I didn't come into contact with them." And Pappano says: "Every time I've been in Abbey Road I always stick my head in Studio Two [where The Beatles recorded], and just stand there for 10 seconds." And it's only correct to acknowledge that the public uproar that greeted news reports last year that EMI were to sell off Abbey Road – in the light of which they swiftly stated they were not – owed as much to The Beatles as to the achievements of Boult, Baker or Beecham.

1970s

PERIOD RECORDINGS AND THE ARRIVAL OF DIGITAL

The early music revival is in full blossom and Abbey Road becomes home to the recordings of period pioneer David Munrow and the Early Music Consort of London. "If you look at the influence in his time of David Munrow, it all emanated from Studio One, Abbey Road," says James Bowman, part of the Consort. Munrow, he recalls, "was very happy working there. I think that's why his recordings poured out in such an extraordinarily slick way. He had the whole thing set up just as he wanted it." Many of Munrow's sessions were produced by Christopher Bishop but some were looked after by one of his successors, John Willan, whose first recording at Abbey Road was a Dufay Mass conducted by Munrow. Like most people I meet, Willan began on the bottom rung of the ladder, learning his craft almost as an apprentice. "I started there as an assistant to Christopher Bishop,

and sat in on countless Boult recordings. My job was to sit in the control room and get Chris coffee; but then he'd give me his score to mark up the sheets, telling them which bit of the tape to use." In time he became a producer, working on recordings with, among others, André Previn, a conductor who takes us on to the next big technological development: digital recording.

EMI's first digital recording was of Debussy's *Images*, performed by Previn and the London Symphony Orchestra (with Parker as engineer). "It was the first digital record made at Abbey Road, and I never understood exactly what that meant!" says Previn. "What they did tell me, which I liked, was that it was very difficult in those beginning days of digital recording to make intercuts, so they were always very pleased if the conductor or soloists said, 'Why don't we try and not have any?' So I remember we worked under the delusion for a while that you couldn't make any cuts, so there are a lot of those very early LSO records by me where there are absolutely no cuts." The recording went on to win two *Gramophone* Awards in 1979 – the Orchestral Award and one for Engineering. And together with the LSO, Previn made more than 300 recordings at Abbey Road. "In those days, if we had something going on at the Festival Hall at the end of the week, and I thought it might be interesting, I would call EMI and they'd say 'We might as well record it', and we did.

1980s and '90s

DISTURBING THE NEIGHBOURS AND A NARROWESCAPE

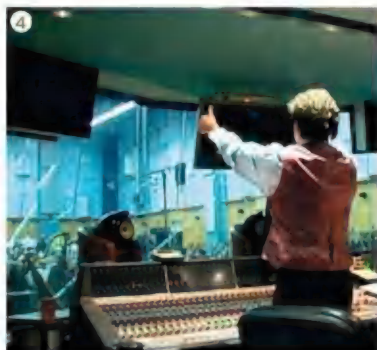
It's 4am and suburban St John's Wood is, mostly, asleep. An exception is producer Andrew Keener, editing a recording for EMI's budget-price Classics for Pleasure label. EMI has allowed him to use an Abbey Road editing suite – housed in a hut beside the building – but, not being a full-price label, he has to do it at night when nobody else wants it. Needing some fresh air, he steps outside, leaving the door open behind him. Tchaikovsky bursts into the night air. And then, during a quiet moment, a Liverpudlian voice from a nearby apartment yells out "Shut up!" or words to that effect. The aggrieved neighbour, Keener later learns, is none other than Paul McCartney.

You can't escape the legacy of The Beatles at Abbey Road, you see. Andrew Walter recalls the Fab Four's producer Sir George Martin popping in one day with a bunch of old test pressings he was going to throw away, but decided he should probably see what was on them first. Walter duly transferred them, writing down what they contained, and at the bottom of the list was "Love me do". It turned out to be the first test pressing the Beatles had ever made, saved from destruction by a classical music expert.

2000s

ALAGNA, GHEORGHIU AND PAPPANO

Tenor Roberto Alagna is standing on Studio One's recently constructed balcony, spurring on his wife,



- 1 Dame Kiri Te Kanawa recording in Studio One in July 2006
- 2 Yehudi Menuhin recording at Abbey Road in 1969
- 3 A snapshot of Angela Gheorghiu, taken from her personal collection
- 4 Paul McCartney approves a take of Ecce cor meum in 2006
- 5 Antonio Pappano coaxes the Philharmonia in La bohème in 1995
- 6 A London Symphony Orchestra session in Studio One in 2003
- 7 (L-R): Zukerman, Barenboim and du Pré recording Beethoven piano trios in 1969

ABBEY ROAD MILESTONES Pivotal events in Abbey Road's 80-year history



1929
No 3 Abbey Road is bought by The Gramophone Company Limited; building of the studios begins

1931
Elgar officially opens the studios on November 12, conducting the LSO in "Land of Hope and Glory" in Studio One

1932
Elgar invites the 16-year-old Yehudi Menuhin to record his Violin Concerto - the start of a lifelong link to Abbey Road

1930s
Artur Schnabel records Beethoven's piano sonatas and five concertos - taking 15 volumes and 100 records

1946
Study of magnetic recording techniques developed in Germany during the war leads to the use of tape at Abbey Road

1955
The introduction of stereo recording at Abbey Road



RAYMOND WEIL

GENEVE



INDEPENDENCE

IS A STATE OF MIND

soprano Angela Gheorghiu, as she sings the Act 4 aria from *Il trovatore*, while below Antonio Pappano conducts. This combination of artists, label and producing team have in the past decade produced opera sets very much in the spirit of Studio One's great, Legge-inspired line-ups. Beginning for Pappano in 1995 with *La bohème*, continuing in 1997 with *La rondine* (where he was first joined by Gheorghiu and Alagna), their Abbey Road discography now includes a highly acclaimed *Tosca* film (while Pappano has also conducted a *Tristan* with Plácido Domingo) and many orchestral recordings, including most recently the Rachmaninov piano concertos with Leif Ove Andsnes. And a more unusual disc, too...

In 1997, to mark EMI's centenary, it was decided to make a record in the old style: directly on to wax plates. Alagna began to sing, Pappano accompanying on the piano. After a few bars, the tenor stopped and asked if he could do it again, at which point the producer reminded him that no, you couldn't, it was being recorded straight on to wax – they only had six discs, and he'd just wasted one of them. Gheorghiu also joined them for a duet, and captured amid all the crackle is a memento that neatly folds back the riches of recording the present on to the heritage of its past. As Gheorghiu put it: "We recorded in exactly the way that Caruso did – it was a wonderful experience."

Perhaps Gheorghiu is good place to end our story, for talking to the soprano is to discover an effusive love for Abbey Road that seems to sum up everything her colleagues, present and past, have all loved about it, too. Here is a world-class soprano, singing in the same beloved acoustic and treading exactly the same wooden floor as her illustrious predecessors. "I really feel at home in that studio. It gives me goosebumps when I think about that," she says. "It is related to family, friends and music – everything I love." She relishes the link with the heritage of both classical and pop ("One day I will steal a picture of The Beatles," she jokes), and enjoys the canteen, where Sir Adrian Boult, André Previn and The Beatles all once queued and "where we can make new friends and share opinions about our sessions".

And finally there is Abbey Road itself. "Also I like the street," she adds. "Really, I enjoy the street. It's very peaceful, it seems I am not in a big city there." And so we're back to where we began: a 19th-century town house, set back from the road on a north London, leafy suburban street, but behind whose unassuming façade music history has been – and continues to be – made. 🎧

 Celebrate Abbey Road through some of its iconic recordings on the Gramophone Player; visit www.gramophone.co.uk



Thomas Hampson, Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu record Massenet's *Werther* in August 1998

ABBEY ROAD CLASSICS

Ten of the most famous recordings from the London studios



Elgar - Violin Concerto
Yehudi Menuhin *vn* LSO / Elgar
EMI 566979-2

Perhaps Abbey Road's defining recording, this finds the 13-year-old Menuhin under the composer's baton for what remains one of the great interpretations of the Concerto.



Elgar - Sea Pictures
Janet Baker *mez* LSO / Barbirolli
EMI 562886-2

Coupled with the equally inspired account of the Cello Concerto with Jacqueline du Pré (recorded elsewhere), Baker is at her matchless best here.



Mozart - Horn Concertos
Dennis Brain *hn* Philh Orch / Karajan
EMI 566898-2

Before his tragically early death, Dennis Brain took to Abbey Road for one of the finest of all Mozart recordings, superb in its control of style, colour and level.



Wagner - Wesendonck Lieder
Janet Baker *mez* LPO / Boult
EMI 208087-2

Janet Baker's *Wesendonck Lieder*, like her *Elgar Sea Pictures*, is so infused with the force of her musical personality that her account bears any comparison.



Debussy - Images. Prélude à L'après-midi d'un faune, etc
LSO / Previn
EMI 391967-2

This, EMI's first digital classical music recording, used the new technology to show off the colour palette of Previn's LSO.



Brahms - Cello Sonatas
Jacqueline du Pré *vc* Daniel Barenboim *pf* EMI 562741-2

The real-life partnership between these two musicians is carried over into thrilling music-making here.



Taverner - The Protecting Veil
Steven Isserlis *vc* LSO / Rozhdestvensky
EMI 237691-2

This wonderfully soulful premiere recording caught the public imagination and brought Isserlis and Taverner to wider fame.



Puccini - La rondine
Robert Alagna *ten* Angela Gheorghiu *sop* LSO / Pappano
EMI 556338-2

This entry in Pappano's Puccini series rescued the opera from obscurity and won the team *Gramophone's* Record of the Year Award.



Vaughan Williams - Sea Symphony
Soloists; LSO / Haitink
EMI 586026-2

A European view of this English seafaring work brought the exciting turbulence of foreign oceans, visionary conducting and a *Gramophone* Award.



Wagner - Tristan und Isolde
Plácido Domingo *ten* Nina Stemme *sop* ROH Orch / Pappano
EMI 558006-5

With studio recordings on the large scale becoming rarer, this was an unexpected joy. Domingo delivers a *Tristan* of great and moving stature in a production that draws superb music-making from all the artists involved.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEX VON KROETITZ. THE BEATLES' RELEASE ABBEY ROAD. COPYRIGHT: DIGITAL REMASTER

1962

On June 6, The Beatles make a commercial test recording for producer George Martin, who signs them

1965

Menuhin re-records Elgar's Violin Concerto at Abbey Road, this time with Sir Adrian Boult

1969

The Beatles record "Abbey Road"



1979

André Previn records Debussy's *Images*, using digital recording techniques

1980

A new initiative for Abbey Road sees Studio One's first full orchestra film-scoring session

1997

EMI anniversary marked with a wax disc recording by Alagna and Pappano



2000

Tosca recorded by Gheorghiu and Pappano as both audio and film

Kent Nagano,

HERO OF MONTREAL

Once a champion of neglected music, the American conductor has dived into the standard repertoire to rebuild the reputation of Canada's best-known orchestra. He's getting his reward with a spectacular new concert hall, reports **Andrew Farach-Colton**

I've come to Montreal to witness the Montreal Symphony Orchestra bid adieu to the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, its home for the past 47 years. Emotions are running high on this brilliantly sunny June day, yet it wouldn't be entirely accurate to say this is an especially fond farewell. The auditorium was designed as a multi-purpose performance space that, in addition to the orchestra, hosts ballet, opera, visiting Broadway musicals and pop music concerts. Indeed, the orchestra has long been relegated to perform there only on weekday nights. The primary problem, however, is the acoustic. Kent Nagano, the orchestra's music director, puts it as plainly as possible: "It's rather difficult to play Haydn, Mozart or Bach in a 3,500-seat hall."

Nagano is in a reflective mood – and with good reason. Tonight, an era ends. On September 7, another era begins with the orchestra's inaugural concert at its new, \$250-million home at Place des Arts. Culminating in Beethoven's Ninth, the performance is being recorded by Sony for release in 2012.

Nagano became the music director in 2006 following the dramatic departure of Charles Dutoit, whose relationship with the orchestra had soured, triggering a firestorm in the press. A long, bitter strike ensued. "I found that I'd walked into a very unstable situation," says the soft-spoken and indefatigably diplomatic Nagano. "The visibility of the conflict meant that our audiences began to consider what other options they might have for their leisure time. Yet it was clear to me that nothing is ever quite like you've read about it in a newspaper. And it's also true that what may be accurate might not necessarily reflect the truth." Without extra financial resources, Nagano says, he had but a single option: "The only choice was to be genuinely appealing to our public. And our aim was to raise the bar, not to lower it. We believed that the audience would respond to quality."

Looking back through the orchestra's archive, Nagano was shocked to discover gaping holes in the repertoire. "We couldn't find a record

of certain Beethoven symphonies ever having been played. They probably were played here 40 years ago, but they weren't active parts of the orchestra's repertoire – and it was the same with important symphonies by Haydn, Schubert and Schumann. So our first task was to bring the repertoire back into balance, because it's partly through finding that balance that one also develops good orchestral health."

Those who know Nagano's work entirely through his recordings may be surprised by the conductor's focus on the standard repertoire. After all, he first made a name for himself as music director of the Lyon National Opera with a spectacular Virgin Classics recording of Prokofiev's rarely-staged *The Love for Three Oranges*, winner of Gramophone's 1990 Record of the Year Award (Nagano is once again the golden boy of the Gramophone Awards, having garnered the most nominations of any artist on the roster at last year's ceremony). And, before Lyon, he'd cut his operatic teeth as assistant to Sarah Caldwell during the heyday of the now legendary Opera Company of Boston.

In Lyon, Nagano also presided over productions and recordings of Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, the original version of Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* and the French version of *Salome*.

I suggest that by championing unusual repertoire, Nagano is, like Caldwell, something of a maverick himself. Yet he doesn't look happy with my comment (sincerely intended as a compliment) and quickly takes a verbal step back. "Well, let's put this in a broader context.

The opera companies of Lyon and Boston have the challenge of being regionally based with very dominant and established institutions nearby. In the case of Boston, there's obviously the New York Metropolitan; with Lyon, there's the Paris Opera. Both companies answer that challenge by performing the full standard repertoire, of course, but they also display their own strong personalities which manifests itself partly in a tendency to explore what lies beyond the standard repertoire. That's what Ms Caldwell was famous for.

Kent Nagano **The Gramophone Interview**

Transformative:
Under Nagano's direction, the
Montreal SO has re-established
its connection to its audience



'Quebec is where European civilisation began in North America. The link to Europe is fundamental to the culture here and seems to be growing stronger'

Even though our season in Boston was built upon *Bobème* and *Figaro*, she wasn't afraid to mount Sessions's *Montezuma*, Nono's *Intolleranza*, or to give the US premiere of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*. It took a company like Ms Caldwell's to push the boundaries and provide a platform for these works.

"In Lyon, the situation was a little different because the company dates back to Lully's day. But, still, with Paris not so far away, it took an enormous amount of creative ambition in order to become visible. We, too, performed the full, standard repertoire, but when the time came to decide which works to record, we thought very, very carefully. And we decided that we wanted our recordings to live for a long time and not have a shelf life of just a few years. We wanted to contribute a recorded document that would become a reference point."

Nagano was born and raised in a tiny town on a lonely stretch of central California's coastline. His parents made their living as farmers. As a boy, he says, he longed to live in New York City to be in the thick of things. Today, there are few if any visible traces of his rural California roots other than his shoulder-length hair. In a very real and literal sense, Nagano has become a man of the world.

His career took wing in Europe, starting in Lyon in 1988, then in Manchester with the Hallé. He spent six years in the German capital at the helm of the German Symphony Orchestra, Berlin (and retains the title of honorary conductor there – a sign of the musicians' admiration and affection for him), while simultaneously serving as music director of the Los Angeles Opera. Since 2006, the year he took over in Montreal, Nagano has also been general music director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich.

Such is the peripatetic life of the modern maestro, one might say. Yet Nagano seems to take special pleasure in soaking up the local culture of the cities where he's lived and worked, so much so that it's no surprise to learn that, after graduating from university, he'd seriously considered a career in law in order to pursue his interest in international politics and diplomacy.

I ask Nagano about the unique musical requirements of his post in Montreal. And, again, he immediately broadens the context. "Quebec is where European civilisation began in North America and the link to Europe remains. It's fundamental to the culture here. It's so powerful, in fact, that instead of being diluted over time, it seems to be growing stronger as the province's identity develops. Quebec also has many of the same attributes that the rest of North America is famous for, both positive and negative, including the ability to maximise efficiency, to think outside the box and to pursue one's dreams without the shackles of any social structure. Yet these exist within the context of a European cultural sensibility and aesthetic. I've often wondered why one finds this here in Montreal but not, say, in New Orleans or in Boston, where the ties to Europe were so strong 200 years ago. Surely the language – Quebec French or Québécois – plays an important role, though other languages are spoken here, too. But, the way I see it, Quebec is not a melting pot in the way the US is; it's more what I'd describe as a mosaic – a very beautiful and coherent mosaic."

It may be that putting things in a broader context – historically, culturally, socially, philosophically – is how Nagano's mind works.

Here and now:
Nagano's programming is rooted
in traditional repertoire yet is
also 'very relevant to Quebec'



Nagano on disc



Messiaen Saint
François d'Assise
Soloists, Hallé
DG 445 176-2GH4

Nagano developed a close relationship with Messiaen. His aptly intense recording of the mystical French composer's magnum opus is an impressive achievement.



Bruckner
Symphony No 4
Bavarian State Orchestra
Sony 88697 36881-2

Nagano makes a compelling case for the original 1874 version of

Bruckner's *Romantic* Symphony in an interpretation that's notable both for its patience and attention to textural detail.



Beethoven Piano
Concertos Nos 4 & 5
Montreal SO,
Till Fellner pf
ECM 476 3315

Alert, scintillating, graceful and nobly poetic, this pair of Beethoven piano concertos demonstrates that character can be conveyed without any hint of overstatement or ostentation. Surely a Beethoven recording to treasure.

Either that or he simply does not enjoy talking about himself, which surely makes him an anomaly among conductors. In any case, he's taken his understanding of Quebec's strong sense of identity and programmed the orchestra's concerts accordingly.

"When we perform the work of a Canadian or Québécois composer, we put it at the centre of the programme; the rest of the programme is built around it. Also, we try to illuminate other parts of the repertoire by giving the audience a new perspective, a new way to experience the music. To give a specific instance, let's take Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*, which has been performed regularly – one might even say it's been over-performed. My question was, what connection does our audience in Montreal have with the literature of Nietzsche? And, since we're primarily a French-speaking province, my staff and I couldn't really come up with an answer. So we decided to re-examine *Ein Heldenleben*



Five years in the making, Montreal Symphony's new concert hall promises exceptional acoustics

The 'shoebox' form dominates the latest addition to the Place des Arts

Unlike the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, which seats 3,500, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra's new and as yet unnamed concert hall will seat 1,900 (with 200 additional seats behind the stage in a section otherwise designated for the chorus). Located next to the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, the new hall takes its place as part of Montreal's Place des Arts.

Designed in a rectangular 'shoebox' form, the interior harks back to the great concert halls of Vienna and Boston and provides a sense of intimacy between orchestra and audience. Even from the back of the balcony, the stage appears to be surprisingly close. Interior walls are clad in wood, and both stage and



ceiling are adjustable, making possible a variety of acoustic environments.

The creation and construction of the acoustical space is being supervised by Artec Consultants Inc, who also oversaw the construction of new concert halls in Philadelphia, Dallas, Birmingham and Reykjavik.

The project has been funded by the first cultural public/private partnership in Quebec's history. The completed hall is due to open on September 7.

to try to explore Nietzsche's intellectual, emotional and spiritual ideas in a very abstract way." The result was a new work by François Dompierre that included spoken solo parts for past and present members of the Canadiens, Montreal's beloved ice hockey team.

"The Canadiens are heroes to the *Québécois*," Nagano explains, "heroes with a real responsibility of identity, image and inspiration for their many fans. And, at that particular moment when the programme took shape, there was a very unfortunate incident with one of the superheroes of the sport whose son was having some difficulties. So, here was a real-life example of gods, heroes and men whose lives are somehow interconnected yet different, with the idea that heroes are not supermen. And the nine or 10 players who performed with us recited texts that reflected some of the philosophical ideas that run through Nietzsche's work. We hoped that would make Strauss's tone-poem somehow more relevant to our time."

Nagano eagerly offers another example. "Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. What does this work mean to us today? Does it even have any meaning? We know from the use of that famous rhythmic motive that there's a heroic idea and that the grand finale suggests a sense of triumph. But it's not the triumph of an individual, really; it's the triumph of the ideals of the French Revolution – liberty, equality, fraternity. So, to explore this, we put together an all-Beethoven programme, pairing the Fifth Symphony with the music for *Egmont*, which, aside from the overture, is not well known here. And we looked to the heroic efforts of General Roméo Dallaire, a Montrealer, who was one of the leaders of the UN forces in Rwanda during the horrific genocide in that country, because there are important parallels between Goethe's play and the Rwandan tragedy – issues of prejudice, cultural conflict, class conflict and nationalism." Nagano engaged Paul Griffiths to write a libretto based upon Dallaire's experiences and Dallaire himself attended the performance (Nagano and the orchestra

have recorded their updated interpretation of *Egmont* – retitled *The General* – coupled with the Fifth Symphony for Sony).

"So that's our approach to programming. It's firmly rooted in the traditional repertoire yet at the same time I like to think that it's very relevant to Quebec." And the result? "The audience has embraced the orchestra as its own. One of the reasons we have a brand-new concert hall is because we regularly sell out a 3,500-seat house. The public voted to build this hall."

Nagano's creative approach to programming is manifestly evident in the orchestra's farewell to the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier – a concert performance of Wagner's *Das Rheingold*. "Over the past five years, we've developed quite an audience for Wagner. And, at the same time, the themes of this particular opera – dreaming of Valhalla, an unattainable goal that finally seems to be attainable – seemed somehow apt in this context." I restrain myself from mentioning what happens to Valhalla at the end of *Götterdämmerung*, but Nagano has read my mind. "It's a conceit that's meant to be slightly ironic and lighthearted. This is a very emotional experience for us."

On paper, *Das Rheingold* appeared an odd choice for a celebratory farewell. In practice, however, it worked magnificently. Epic, expectant and rife with conflicting emotions, it fitted the occasion with awe-inspiring precision. Of, course, it helped that the performance was superb. Nagano presented the score as an expansive yet tightly woven dramatic symphony, the singing was generally first-class and the orchestra played its heart out. Before the final, radiant D-flat major sonority had faded away, the audience erupted with cheers. The demonstration was long, loud and palpably heartfelt.

Backstage, after the concert, Nagano looked fairly radiant himself. "You can feel the audience's love for their orchestra," he said, beaming proudly. "You can feel the love." ☺

Kent Nagano's recording of Beethoven's Eroica is reviewed on page 54

FINALLY, EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT NIELSEN

Complex and contradictory, Nielsen's wide output has been sidelined by musicologists, performers and listeners for more than half a century. But, argues **Andrew Mellor**, we might at last be on the brink of a major, reputation-shifting Nielsen revival

Consult *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music* for some commentary on the works of Carl Nielsen and you'll run up against a problem pretty quickly: there isn't any. Here and elsewhere, one of the most prominent cultural figures of the early 1900s is literally edited out of musical history – too insignificant to warrant a mention.

The truth is we've never really known what to do with Nielsen. In any attempt to chart the story of music through Romanticism and beyond, it's far easier to send the naughty little Dane to his bedroom than attempt to crowbar his curious sonic realm into the narrative. At best we pluck out the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies and explain away their compelling nervous energy and knife-edge tension as fitting symptoms of a troubled, war-strewn age. No mention of their musical contexts – the three outstanding developmental works that built up to them or the intriguing essay in symphonic deconstruction that followed.

But we might be on the brink of change. In this age of incessant rediscovery and renewal, it looks as though the spotlight of revisionism is at last swinging its beam towards Carl Nielsen. There are signs that musicians and audiences outside Scandinavia are finally "getting" his music. The early symphonies are creeping into the concert hall, played for the first time from clean critical editions. Major conductors appear to be testing themselves with Nielsen's tricky textures and structures. A new cycle of the six symphonies and three concertos began taping in January, not by a Danish orchestra but by the New York Philharmonic under its American music director. On paper, the act of airbrushing Nielsen out of musical history has been reversed in uplifting detail: a new study from Nordic music scholar Daniel Grimley recasts Nielsen as a visionary – a vital precursor to modernism and a central protagonist in the playground scrap that was 20th-century music.

True understanding of his entire oeuvre could at last grant Nielsen a genuinely significant place in the international repertoire, the sort of

acceptance afforded Leoš Janáček a few decades ago. And if the Janáček comparison feels a little stretched, musically speaking it's wholly apt. Nielsen, like Janáček, was of rural, working-class stock. To the rigorous discipline of composition he brought a vital, uncompromising accent and a distinctly unschooled edge. In a Denmark awash with undercurrents of rebellious anti-decadence and on the verge of a return to rural cultural roots at the dawn of the 20th century, they lapped it up.

For the Danes, Nielsen was a gift. He epitomised the democratic ideal of the "country boy made good" in a direct parallel with Hans Christian Andersen (who hailed from the same windswept island as the composer). But his music also embodied a handful of emerging Danish ideals – from health and vigour to cheek and satire. These are the contexts in which we should approach Nielsen's sometimes difficult but ultimately life-affirming hallmarks: his wild attitude to tonality, his incessant playfulness and *joie de vivre*, his intense emotional edge and his extraordinary harbouring of musical energy.

A musical energy, that is, which has an uncannily contemporary ring to it in 2011. It grabs hold of you, whether it's striding inspiringly outwards or fighting against itself with fissile, chaotic force. "It's physical music," says conductor Michael Schönwandt, Nielsen's most prominent Danish exponent. "You actually feel this physical strength in the music, it reaches out to you and gets under your skin." There's a sense of that even in photographs of the composer: he seems to leap out from behind the lens – the piercing eyes, the suggestive smile and the electrically charged hair all hemmed in by neat, respectable tailoring.

Wrapped up in that image, in fact, is a vital Nielsen truth. Though disagreement still dogs some of the composer's most significant works, there's a gathering consensus around the theory that Nielsen was a man torn in two. Behind the primeval energetic force that underpins so much of his music, argues Daniel Grimley, was a tension created





Nielsen the successful artist, and immortalised in his wife Anne Marie's equine sculpture.
Previous page: the young composer shows off



'Signs of the composer's urge to ram major keys down the throats of minor ones are already prevalent in the First Symphony'

by the juxtaposition of the composer's rural upbringing against his adult status as a celebrated city sophisticate. Born to labourers on the island of Funen, Nielsen was separated from the mainland of Zealand (and Copenhagen) by a cultural and literal gulf – one he never really traversed and which arguably came to shape his art.

This collision of radically different worlds is heard directly in Nielsen's music – in the angst that undermines its sense of structure, in its playful nonconformism and in the rogue forms and modulations that invade its material. It can wrong-foot the listener spectacularly, but it also lies behind the music's most compelling moments of rupture, outburst and momentum. For Grimley, it represents "a rich and playful dialogue that might be interpreted as a musical response to the diversity of the modern world".

And so to our modern world – and across a rather different gulf, that of the Atlantic Ocean – where Alan Gilbert is returning his New York Philharmonic to the Nielsen sound world first introduced

to it by Leonard Bernstein. In January they recorded the Second Symphony for Dacapo, *The Four Temperaments*, a piece with its fair share of stylistic curiosities: the unsettling spasm of spatial confusion that lurches into the opening movement; the oom-pah finale wrapped up in oddball bumbling nonchalance. "There's certainly a tension between the formality of the symphony and Nielsen's folk, Danish and frankly slightly bizarre personality," Gilbert has found. "It seems like he was a very unusual guy, which combined with the need to function as a respectable member of society to form this paradox. I feel that very much in the music; this balance of formal vigour and these iconoclastic, unusual tendencies."

Likewise, another of Nielsen's strikingly contemporary ticks: his frequent conjuring of structural and thematic chaos, often at the front end of a work – as in the opening bars of the Third and Fourth Symphonies and First Violin Sonata. "You have no idea what's going on with these chords, they sound kind of random," says Gilbert of the opening of the Third Symphony. "It's a kind of controlled chaos, and I think that's very much one of the things he was trying to express in music – a sort of reigning-in of chaos and of the desire to achieve randomness."

That lack of security in Nielsen's music is both enchanting and intoxicating. Often he'll create passages of intense physical strength while also appearing to place them on a tightrope, seconds from structural and intellectual collapse. After the disorientating opening thwacks of the Third Symphony, the music slips on to defined musical tracks before rupturing again – juddering into a wild waltz as soaring brass cut across manically trilling winds. It sounds wonderfully risky, but to get musicological for a moment, it also echoes Grimley's theory of Nielsen the fractured personality. The effectively rural feel of the movement's main theme collapses into the urbane waltz – a form that for decades had danced its way through the Germanic Danish music so fashionable in Copenhagen.

It's one thing to try and analyse these musical gestures in the hope that it might turn disinterest for Nielsen into adoring enthusiasm. In reality the music must speak for itself. Which is why the chronological symphony cycle from New York – the first new cycle for eight years (10 if you discount the most recent Danish cycle) – is so vital. Just as the journey from Beethoven's early Classical symphonies to the *Eroica*, the Fifth and beyond is inseparable from our vision of the artist and the man, so the essence of Nielsen's symphonies is only really understood when you take a completist view of them.

At the heart of that is Nielsen's career-long battle with conventional tonality. Signs of the composer's urge to ram major keys down the throats of minor ones are already prevalent in the First Symphony. The finale launches in the 'wrong' (major) key before instantly correcting itself (into the minor) within three bars. Nielsen's letters and diaries reveal constant frustration with the notion of perceived

NIELSEN: A LIFE IN SEVEN YEARS

1888

Niels Gade, head of the Copenhagen Conservatory, dismisses his student Nielsen's Op 1 Suite for Strings as "too messy"

1893

Symphonic Fantasy consolidates some now-discernable Nielsen hallmarks: muscular energy, playful tonalities and waltzing broadsides

1907

Nielsen writes the song "Jens Vejmand" which becomes a staple of the Danish musical psyche and the tune every Dane sings at school

1914

Nielsen resigns his conducting and violin-playing post at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen; problems with his marriage escalate

1923

In the year of *Gramophone's* founding, Nielsen visits Britain and takes the LSO through his Fourth Symphony

1925

Nielsen meets Schoenberg and sees his Sixth Symphony condemned as disorganised and tonally moribund

1931

Nielsen's turn to contrapuntalism reaches its apex with the organ monolith *Commotio*; he dies later that year in Copenhagen

“rules” surrounding the use of particular keys. The major/minor face-off continues into the Second and Third Symphonies (note the mystical tonal shade of the latter’s *Andante pastorale*) and spectacularly in the Fourth. Nielsen may have been disturbed by the crescendo of war – he wrote the piece in 1916 – but he really only expresses himself through a continuation of ideals he’s already established.

And those ideals seem more relevant now than ever, not least as the fundamental antitheses of life are pitted against one another in the Fourth Symphony. “It’s the most obvious realisation of the eternal fight between good and bad, between darkness and light,” says Schönwandt of the piece. At the end of it you’re left with an overwhelming sense of renewal – a blazing but sudden “new dawn”. When we get to the Fifth, the major/minor battle has graduated into a full-on counterpoint of modulations, a twisting harmonic tunnel-borer egged on by a confrontational improvisation on the snare drum at the apex of Part 1. By the time of the Sixth Symphony, Nielsen seems to have freed himself from the power of “major” and “minor” altogether. Taken as a whole, it’s a symphonic journey that’s arguably more lifelike, tangible and concise than that of any other 20th-century composer.

Nielsen famously gave voice to his own inextinguishable will to live, but he also reflected on the struggle for life that his music itself

‘From fractured New York, will we at last begin to hear the lone voices that so often pervade Nielsen’s works as symbols of a true cosmopolitanism?’

would face. He once described his works as akin to “a powerful root rising up through the manure, nourished by it, beaten by nettles in the breeze, minding itself from all the weeds around it but nevertheless suckling the same stuff from the earth”. It’s Nielsen’s view of creative evolution; the Darwinian struggle for musical survival. And how astute an observation it now seems.

Certain advocates have tended to the root since. Herbert Blomstedt’s Decca recordings with the San Francisco Symphony brought Nielsen’s symphonies alive with striking verve, but despite the best efforts of him and others – Bernstein, Horenstein, Vänskä and Elder among them – the composer has never been presented as uncompromisingly as he should be on disc or in concert. As for the brilliantly original vocal, chamber, instrumental and stage works, they mostly languish in obscurity outside Scandinavia.

But the coming months will be good to the Nielsen discography – in a symphonic sense, at least. The First and Sixth Symphonies will arrive shortly as the second instalment of Sir Colin Davis’s Nielsen cycle for LSO Live. Gustavo Dudamel’s recording of the Fourth and Fifth with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra is released later this month. Dacapo will reissue Schönwandt’s recordings with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra (repackaged with the original video recordings included) as an overture to the first release in their New York cycle, beginning next year with the Second and Third Symphonies. If a composer’s ascendancy is judged on his or her recording projects, Nielsen appears to have been cleared for take-off.

And with good reason, believes Alan Gilbert. “I totally believe in him as a composer and I believe he stands up to Sibelius, without question,” he says. “I firmly believe Nielsen’s time has come.”

Audience response to his introductions of the early symphonies in Chicago and Philadelphia, Gilbert claims, has been surprising and encouraging. “In this particular age, when we’re looking for anything that has a truly personal voice, well, Nielsen does that. I think his music speaks to the time.”

Particularly, one suspects, in fractured New York – that city of arrivals, departures and the endless grind of cultural gears. For the big shift in Nielsen’s historic position, from sideshow curiosity to proto-modernist, one could hardly wish for more fertile ground. From this city of diversity, will we at last begin to hear the lone, disenfranchised narrative voices that so often pervade Nielsen’s works as symbols of a true cosmopolitanism – the diverse elemental forces that connect art to the essence of human life?

Maybe. But rather more tangibly, we might be about to witness a shift in the Nielsen performing tradition. “There’s been a kind of dry approach to recording Nielsen’s music in the past; I have the sense that people think this is a cool, Nordic sound and so they should be rather dispassionate about the way they play it,” Gilbert says. “I don’t see it that way at all. I think it’s really full-blooded, passionate, dramatic and ultimately human music. That’s what I’m going for, and that’s what the Philharmonic is good at.” The Danish producers from Dacapo, Gilbert says, were taken aback by the sound of the New York Phil’s first live recording. “They’d never heard anything like it – they found it refreshing and absolutely new.”

Bold words, but welcome ones – whether or not they’re fulfilled. What Nielsen needs more than ever is some renewed sense of controversy – a rigorous interpretative debate to replace the blanket apathy and confusion that have held sway for decades. The side effect is also, essentially, the reward: we get to hear more and more of this beguiling, enchanting and fortifying music. 🎧

Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism by Daniel Grimley will be reviewed in the next issue

Nielsen: Beyond the symphonies



Maskerade

Soloists, Danish RSO & Chorus / Schirmer

Decca 478 0146-2DM2

Denmark’s national operatic touchstone that frequently travels abroad, *Maskerade* offers a vital sonic picture of “old Copenhagen”, all it stood for and, indeed, hid.



Violin Sonata No 1

Jon Gjesme vn

Jens Elvekjaer pf

Dacapo 6 226075

Nielsen once railed against the harmony-leading dominant seventh chord but he uses it with touching (ironic?) beauty in this luminous stylistic exercise.



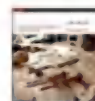
An Imaginary Journey to the Faroe Islands

Danish NSO / Dausgaard

Dacapo 6 220518

A tone-poem which foreshadows the very distinctive style Nordic

orchestral music inhabits today. Did Aho, Rautavaara and Brødsgaard hear those crazy clarinet riffs?



String Quartets

Young Danish String Quartet

Dacapo 6 220521

People talk of Mendelssohnian traits in the First Symphony but the Germanic influence is far more keenly felt – and then edged away from – in Nielsen’s finely balanced chamber works for strings.



Three Motets

Canzone Choir /

Frans Rasmussen

Danacord DACOCD386

Nielsen marinated his early ideas for these choral works in the structural language of Palestrina, creating stark, bracing and rigorous manifestos for his late stylistic turn to polyphony. Technically challenging and uncompromisingly Nielsenite.

Symphony for a King

Elgar's Second Symphony was first heard 100 years ago, dedicated to the memory of Edward VII. It was not the expected success, but has triumphed on disc. **Geraint Lewis** selects the finest recording

The 22-year-old Adrian Boult was too busy with hectic Eights Week activities in Oxford to make it down to London for the first performance of Elgar's Symphony No 2 at the Queen's Hall on May 24, 1911. He wasn't the only unexpected absentee: "So keen was the interest, indeed," wrote one snide critic, "that not more than one half of the balcony stood empty." Elgar himself conducted and immediately sensed a coolness in the applause, hissing to his leader WH Reed, "What's the matter with them, Billy? They sit there like a lot of stuffed pigs." That summer of 1911 was famously to be one of the hottest on record, so they may well have been sweating like pigs too. But they weren't standing – or cheering – as they had after the First Symphony's triumphant London premiere in 1908.

It should have been a gloriously auspicious day and the build-up to another pinnacle of Elgar's public career. May 24 was Empire Day, the official memorial of Queen Victoria's birthday following her death in January 1901. In just a few weeks, on June 21, 1911, her grandson would be crowned King George V in Westminster Abbey, with Elgar commissioned to write two works for the Coronation Service and awarded the exclusive Order of Merit by his new monarch a few days before the event. What had passed in

between, however – the opulent reign of Edward VII – was somehow over far too quickly, and along with it also would go Elgar's extraordinary decade in the sun. On July 16 he wrote to a friend: "I have my Star (which you shall see) & that is something, but troubles manifold dog me & it is *by no means* in sunshine that I walk – quite the reverse, alas!" The failure of the Second Symphony to make its proper mark was in truth the beginning of the end – and at the Coronation itself, Sir Edward Elgar OM, although commanded to attend with Lady Elgar, was mysteriously nowhere to be seen.

He first tried his hand at writing a symphony back in Worcester as a self-taught 21-year-old in 1878, which he modelled on Mozart's great G minor, K550. Thirty years later he would say that he didn't "know any discipline from which I learned so much". But it would take all three decades to get to that momentous afternoon in December 1908 when Hans Richter opened the score of Symphony No 1, Op 55 (dedicated to him) and turned proudly to the LSO, saying, "Gentlemen, let us now rehearse the greatest symphony of modern times, *and not only in this country*," an emphasis Adrian Boult, who was present, would always remember.

Boult was in every sense an insider. In 1901 he started at Westminster School and soon found himself in Elgar's London circle, thanks



The Gramophone Collection

Sir Edward Elgar
conducts the
LSO at Queen's
Hall in 1911



PHOTOGRAPHY: ARTHUR REYNOLDS COLLECTION/LEBRECHT MUSIC & ARTS

The Gramophone Collection

to a family friend in Cheshire. On a visit in 1904 to the redoubtable Queen Victoria-like widow Mrs Wood, she said to him, "You know, dear Adrian, my nephew Frank Schuster lives at Westminster quite near the Abbey, and knows a great many actors and musicians. Dr Elgar, the new composer, is a great friend. I will write and tell Frank he must ask you to some of his parties." So on December 11 a shy young Boulton was suddenly sitting next to Elgar in the music room at 22 Old Queen Street with the newly knighted composer happily showing him the printed full score of *The Apostles*, which had just arrived. Schuster was to befriend the 15-year-old Boulton in a manner which many at the time might secretly have found rather entertaining. Here was a fabulously rich, unmarried, Jewish homosexual, going to high-profile public concerts and fashionable parties with a tall and rather gangly schoolboy as his obviously innocent and unwitting companion! But the unlikely association was to pay astonishing dividends for all concerned, and played a fortuitous hand in rescuing the unfortunate Second Symphony from its initial fate.

"Wonderful performance of the Symphony. From beginning to end it seemed absolutely to penetrate the audience's mind and heart. After 1st movement great applause & shouts, rarely heard till end...Adrian was wonderful – At end frantic enthusiasm & they dragged out E., who looked very overcome, hand in hand with Adrian at least 3 times. E. was so happy & pleased." Thus Lady Elgar in a diary entry following the remarkable LSO concert on March 16, 1920, when the Symphony No 2, Op 63, was at last reintroduced to Londoners at the Queen's Hall. The composer wrote the following morning: "My dear Adrian: With the sounds ringing in my ears I send a

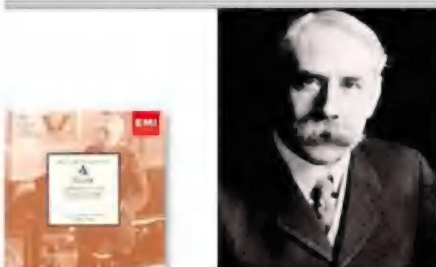
word of thanks for your splendid conducting of the Sym: I am most grateful to you for your affectionate care of it & I feel that my reputation in the future is in your safe hands. It was a wonderful series of sounds. Bless you!" His words had greater prescience than he could ever have imagined – but the occasion was also to be tinged with poignancy. Barely three weeks later, Alice Elgar was dead and Elgar's creative life effectively over. His grief was initially impenetrable but part of the slow thawing involved regular stays at Schuster's other home on the river at Bray, where Adrian Boulton was often present. In December 1921 Boulton conducted the Second Symphony again – with the short-lived British Symphony Orchestra at the People's Palace on the Mile End Road – and Elgar was there incognito with his daughter Carice. He wrote: "It was wonderfully good yesterday and you did the thing splendidly and I thank you for your interest in and loving care of the work." Boulton took the Second under his wing, including it in his first European concerts in Prague and Vienna in 1922, and on his first major visit to America in 1935 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra; between 1944 and 1976 he made five commercial recordings – the largest number of a single work he undertook. In the event, however, **Sir Edward Elgar** himself got there first.

One factor that brightened the last decade of Elgar's life was the opportunity to record most of his orchestral music for the gramophone. He was signed up by His Master's Voice in May 1914 but the initial discs went straight into the war effort, with specially composed propaganda pieces *Carillon* (for Belgium), *Polonia* (for Poland) and *The Fringes of the Fleet* serving obvious purposes. After 1920 there was no more genuine

composing, so Elgar gradually returned to his earlier scores and it is telling that the first was the Second Symphony, with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra in March 1924. This was an "acoustical" process and on Pearl's sterling transfer it is hard to tell the wood from the trees, though the ear gradually adjusts. A year later, "electrical" recording was developed which Elgar hailed as "the greatest discovery made up to that time in the history of the gramophone". With his 70th birthday approaching in June 1927, advantage of the new technology was taken and the Second Symphony chosen again to mark the occasion. Even at today's distance, the contrast between 1924 and 1927 is a breathtaking revelation – the latter virtually sounds like a "modern" recording and the refulgent colours of the LSO in the Queen's Hall come across vividly. Notable too are some marked differences of tempo and pacing (a characteristic that many who heard Elgar over several years noted) with a gain in length of three minutes. EMI's transfer is preferable to Naxos's and it stands out as a landmark document. When he was in the mood it was said that no conductor could coax such flexibly flowing playing from an orchestra and Elgar had been associated with the LSO from its birth in 1904, so these special players had his music in their blood and bones, and knew exactly how to make it sing uniquely for its creator.

Adrian Boulton was signed by HMV as early as 1920 and obviously wasn't allowed to record any Elgar while the composer was alive and contracted to the same company! But Boulton wasn't slow off the mark when the time sadly came. He put down the Prelude to *Gerontius* with his BBC Symphony Orchestra in June 1934 (three months after Elgar's death), the *Enigma* Variations in

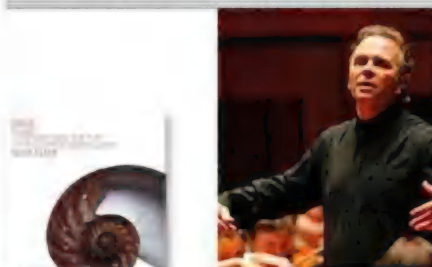
THE COMPOSER CHOICE



LSO / **Sir Edward Elgar**
EMI (M) 567297-2

The 1924 premiere recording is now like gold dust but this 1927 electrical remake is widely available and simply priceless. Here, Elgar is on top form for his 70th birthday and the LSO play with obvious devotion for their former maestro in the vivid acoustics of the Queen's Hall.

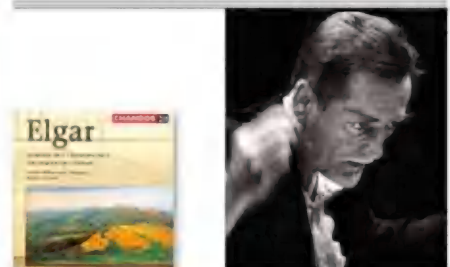
THE 21ST-CENTURY CHOICE



Hallé Orch / **Sir Mark Elder**
Hallé (E) CDHLL7507

With superb recorded sound and passionate playing from the Hallé, there is an irresistible eloquence here which just about gets everything right. Elder's grasp of the symphony's complex emotional journey is impressively sustained and richly rewarding.

THE DARK HORSE



LPO / **Bryden Thomson**
Chandos (S) 2 CHAN241-21

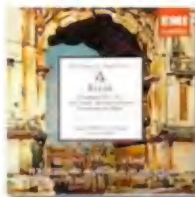
The famous Chandos sound envelops with a halo the LPO under the underrated Scottish conductor. This account really ought to seem "slow" but by some magical alchemy it achieves an unerring sense of internal pace that builds up most movingly.

1936 and the Introduction and Allegro the following year (sounding as startling today as it must have then). The pre-war BBC SO has acquired legendary status, as movingly evinced by Colin Davis in a letter to Boult in 1965: "During my boyhood, under your leadership the BBC SO was the finest in Britain." Sheer corporate virtuosity was one noticeable quality but equally remarkable (and less often noted) is the emotional passion, which surely came as a result of their journey together from 1930. All this and more is stunningly captured in the 1944 recording of the symphony in Bedford Grammar School during the orchestra's wartime evacuation. Even if the EMI sound (as transferred by Beulah) is a bit blanched and not so "alive" as the Queen's Hall 1927 vintage (the perfect acoustic, tragically destroyed by a bomb) there is a genuine sense that no finer performance of this score has ever been played in front of the microphone. The musicians are on fire and Boult steers a path that surpasses Elgar's own in certain key respects. Bernard Shaw once chided the composer for riding a little too quickly through the more "special" moments in his pieces, as though he was reluctant to indulge himself over them. Boult is intuitively sensitive to these corners and allows the music to breathe with natural freedom without dropping a stitch of the architectural fabric in doing so.

Such qualities also shine through Boult's four later recordings. First Hand Records has issued an astonishing transfer of the 1956 version made in Walthamstow Assembly Hall by Westminster/Nixa/Pye. The sound is now clean and vivid but the interpretation outclasses the LPO's playing. The insane BBC decision to "retire" Boult in 1950 arguably deprived Britain of a post-war orchestral era to match the pre-war. In taking over the LPO at short notice, Boult was immediately among friends but it must have been privately galling to compare this rather lacklustre band with the instrument he'd devoted 20 of his most vigorous years to perfecting. The sad decline of the BBC SO is tellingly documented in a turgid Elgar Second recorded live under **Sir Malcolm Sargent** at Bristol's Colston Hall in 1964. That same year saw the issue of Boult's third version, with a rather rough Scottish National Orchestra for Waverley later recast by EMI as a CFP LP (not available on CD).

By 1968, he was back with a hugely improved LPO in Walthamstow for Richard Itter's Lyrita label in sessions that immediately courted controversy because the violins were forcibly grouped together on the left of the conductor instead of divided

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY



DATE / ARTISTS

1924 Royal Albert Hall Orch / **Elgar**

1927 LSO / **Elgar**

1944 BBC SO / **Boult**

1954 Hallé Orch / **Barbirolli**

1956 LPO / **Boult**

1964 Hallé Orch / **Barbirolli**

1964 BBC SO / **Sargent**

1968 LPO / **Boult**

1972 LPO / **Barenboim**

1975 LPO / **Solti**

1975-76 LPO / **Boult**

1977 SNO / **Gibson**

1977 USSR St SO / **Svetlanov**

1979 Hallé / **Loughran**

1980 LPO / **Handley**

1984 Philh Orch / **Haltink**

1985 LPO / **Thomson**

1987 Philh Orch / **Sinopoli**

1989 LPO / **Slatkin**

1990 RPO / **Menuhin**

1990 LSO / **Tate**

1992 BBC SO / **A Davis**

1993 BBC PO / **Downes**

1993 RPO / **Mackerras**

1993 LSO / **Previn**

2001 LSO / **C Davis**

2003 Hallé Orch / **Elder**

2005 BBC Nat Orch of Wales / **Hickox**

2006 Nat Youth Orch of Wales / **Hughes**

2007 Philh Orch / **A Davis**

2008 Sydney SO / **Ashkenazy**

2010 **Farrington** (pf)

RECORD COMPANY (REVIEW DATE)

Pearl (M) (5) GEMMCD59951/5 (9/92 - n/a)

EMI (M) 567297-2 (6/92, A/92, 9/00); Naxos (S) 8 11260

Beulah (M) 5PD15 (10/08)

EMI (P) 566399-2 (6/97); (S) 367918-2

First Hand (B) (3) FHRO6 (9/10)

EMI (M) 764724-2 (2/94 - n/a)

BBC (S) BBCMM280

Lyrita (B) (2) SRCD221 (9/07)

Sony (B) SBK67176

Decca (B) (2) 443 856-2DF2 (9/89, 7/95, 1/96)

EMI (S) 382151-2 (4/88*)

Chandos (S) CHAN6523 (6/84)

Scribendum (M) SC032 (A/04)

ASV (S) CDQS6087 (8/93 - n/a)

CFP (S) 575306-2 (10/88); EMI (B) (3) 575/90-2

EMI (S) (2) 907221-2 (10/97*)

Chandos (S) (2) CHAN241-21 (11/86*)

DG (B) (2) 453 103-2GTA2 (2/89)

RCA (P) 09026 60072-2 (8/89)

Virgin (B) (2) 561430-2

EMI (M) (2) 585512-2

Apex (S) 0927 49586-2 (11/92*, 7/03); Warner (M) (5) 2564 62199-2

Naxos (S) 8 550635 (6/94); (S) (3) 8 503187

Decca Eloquence (S) 442 8277 (12/94*)

Philips (B) (2) 454 250-2PM2 (10/97)

LSO Live (S) LSO0018 (7/02); (S) (3) LSO0072

Hallé (P) CDHLL7507

Chandos (P) (3) CHSA5038 (11/05)

Divine Art (P) DDA25045

Signum/Philh Orch (B) (2) SIGCD179 (8/10)

Extant (P) (3) EXCL00028

Dutton (M) CDLX7259

antiphonally either side of the rostrum (Boult's invariable Germanic positioning). As a result, the original LPs of both symphonies were critically overlooked and many were relieved when EMI allowed Sir Adrian his fifth and final recording in 1975-76 with the LPO in Abbey Road. The passage of time, however, has turned the tables. Simon Gibson's remastering of Lyrita's original for CD issue by Wyastone Estate reveals the sound to be top-notch, vintage Decca, which is what Itter actually paid for – glowingly detailed and richly textured, with tangible punch to the bass and a warm sheen on the strings. Because his loyal LPO players realised that Boult's temper was up, they play like devils for him, with the second violins in particular singing out with extra urgency. The 1976 disc now sounds rather recessed,

with much less immediacy to sound or playing. Boult was keenly interested in **Daniel Barenboim's** 1972 LPO disc and wrote to the critic Michael Kennedy, "I'm coming (rather suddenly) to hate the thought of traditional performance". He makes a telling adjustment to his customary tempo in the first movement, adding length but losing impact, and there are momentary woodwind blemishes that should have been retouched. So by some distance, Lyrita leads the Boult stakes.

John Barbirolli played as a cellist for Boult in the early 1920s and for Elgar himself in many sessions, including the dreadful premiere of the Cello Concerto in 1919. For his first Second Symphony recording in 1954, EMI took the Hallé Orchestra at home in Manchester. The interpretation is straight and the playing honest but scrappy. In 1964 the

Media Partner

CLASSIC *f*M

RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

RNCM MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL VIOLIN COMPETITION 2011

26 November – 3 December *Manchester, UK*

THE JURY

Malcolm Layfield (UK), Wen Zhou Li (UK/China), Pierre Amoyal (France),
Yair Kless (Israel), Chai Liang (China), Maciej Rakowski (UK/Poland),
Almita Vamos (USA), Kazuki Sawa (Japan), Dong-Suk Kang (Korea)

Open to violinists between the ages of 20 and 30

Concerto Final with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra



Prizes up to a total of £30,000

Closing date for applications:
Thursday 1 September

Full details available online:
www.rncm.ac.uk/mivc





Elgar and Adrian Boult at Abbey Road Studios

THE TOP CHOICE



LPO / **Sir Adrian Boult** Lyrita ⓑ Ⓢ SRCD221

The historic 1944 BBC SO recording made in wartime Bedford is still the most astonishing performance of all in some ways but is pretty much matched, in glorious modern sound and with richly textured detail, by an incandescent LPO in 1968 for Lyrita.

been a passionate Elgarian who to my mind has never been caught quite at his best in the studio as compared to the concert hall. So it is here – the BBC SO in session is technically magnificent but doesn't always catch fire, whereas the Philharmonia does so more consistently as caught live in the QEH, sadly not the right acoustic for this music, while the similarly boxed-in Barbican compromises **Sir Colin Davis's** eloquently vocalised LSO Live account. **Richard Hickox** tries hard in Swansea but never really gets going.

So I'm left with two. By rights, **Bryden Thomson** with the LPO simply shouldn't work. At 61'23" his is one of only three to take the piece over the hour but it never actually sounds "slow". It's partly that Chandos's sound is burnished and resonant, more that Thomson captures the internal pace (quite different from mere speed) to build a loving account which is astonishingly moving yet never unsymphonic. **Sir Mark Elder** and his rejuvenated Hallé have a cleaner, clearer acoustic and he generates a consistency of rhythmic ebb and flow that goes right to the heart of the matter. Hats off to him. Yet, just as I think I'm seeing a clear win or even a photo-finish I'm surprised – but on reflection, perhaps not – that Boult on Lyrita finally pips Elder to the post with his masterly handling of the last hurdle. For my money, Boult is the only conductor who finds the radiant essence of Elgar's epigraph to Shelley's elusive "Spirit of Delight" as it hovers to set a glowing seal on the crowning cadence of this great symphonic "pilgrimage of a soul". ●

Visit the **Gramophone Player** at www.gramophone.co.uk to hear excerpts from this month's featured recordings



same forces went down to Kingsway Hall to make Barbirolli's "definitive" account, which differs markedly (and detrimentally) in the two outer movements. Starting with something akin to Elgar's "tremendous in energy", he gets to the "ghostly" second subject (marked "in tempo") and slams on the brakes for a sentimental wallow that damages the organic symphonic texture at a stroke. The same tendency mars the finale, where an unwelcome touch of martial pomposity before the climax leads to an exaggerated slowing that turns integral coda into incidental epilogue. It is said that Barbirolli thought of these pages in terms of Sir Edward Grey's memorably elegiac war-words, thus missing the point in rendering lachrymose what should in Wordsworth's terms be "too deep for tears".

The other 22 accounts follow three basic templates: (i) the "symphonic" Boultian approach; (ii) the "episodic" Barbirolli path; (iii) a synthesis of the two. Nothing much tends to go drastically wrong or terribly different in the central slow march-elegy and fast, often hair-raising Rondo, so the outer movements usefully divide the front runners from the rest of the field. In category (i) come Solti, Gibson, Handley, Slatkin, Menuhin, Previn, Mackerras, Svetlanov and Ashkenazy. **Vernon Handley** and **Leonard Slatkin** add organ pedal notes for eight bars at the finale's

climax, a nice touch but no deal-maker. Handley lacks the grip of his mentor Boult, while Slatkin is merely bland. **Georg Solti** made a mark in 1972 with a superb First but the Second from 1975 sounds as if he's conducting Strauss far too fast and the LPO can't keep up. The best of the rest is easily **Yehudi Menuhin's** moving and supple RPO account, while **Vladimir Ashkenazy** in Australia is good but too dry in sound. **Yevgeny Svetlanov** live in Moscow is exhilarating if impetuous, his heart in the right place, even if his players sound literally on the edge of their seats. Outside this main field, but more fascinating than many of the orchestral discs, is **Iain Farrington's** bravura realisation of his own miraculous transcription for piano.

Category (ii) comprises Barenboim, Loughran, Haitink, Sinopoli, Downes, Hughes and Tate. The mind-boggling 20'38" difference between Elgar in 1924 and **Giuseppe Sinopoli** in 1987 tells its own story – this is the score not so much in slow-motion but virtually asleep.

Bernard Haitink too is soporific and oddly balanced. Barenboim is too readily heart-on-sleeve but is at least interesting. Some of the finest performances come in tranche (iii) – Thomson, Andrew and Colin Davis, Elder and Hickox. **Sir Andrew Davis** has always

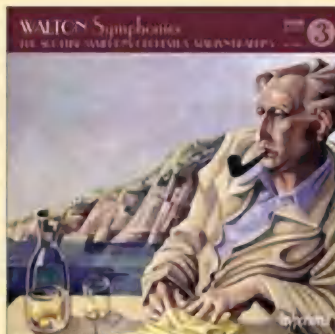
NEW RELEASES

www.hyperion-records.co.uk

WALTON SYMPHONIES

The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Martyn Brabbins gives invigorating and authoritative performances of William Walton's masterful symphonies. Walton spent three years perfecting his dramatic first symphony. The work met with an ecstatic critical reception and has remained popular ever since. The second symphony is more concise and refined. This masterpiece was slow to emerge from the shadow of its predecessor. Also included is the intimate orchestral work *Siesta*.

BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MARTYN BRABBINS



Compact Disc CDA67794

BEYOND ALL MORTAL DREAMS

Stephen Layton and his acclaimed Trinity College Choir perform a stunning disc of American a cappella choral works. The recording is a showcase of little-known American composers unearthed by Layton during his travels. These distinctive and luminous compositions illustrate the context in which better-known composers such as Lauridsen and Whitacre—already championed by Layton—learnt their craft. The choir is in perfect voice. Their purity of tone, flawless intonation and depth of feeling are truly exceptional.

TRINITY COLLEGE CHOIR CAMBRIDGE
STEPHEN LAYTON

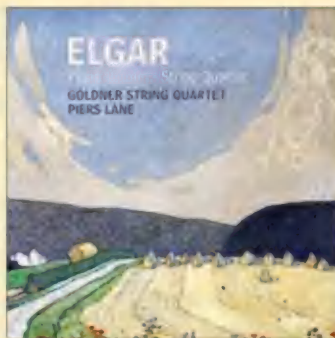


Compact Disc CDA67832

ELGAR PIANO QUINTET

Both Elgar's String Quartet and the Piano Quintet are works of great depth and elegance. Their conservative style disregards the compositional trends of the time and displays an unabashed late-romanticism. The disc features sumptuous playing from the acclaimed Goldner String Quartet, who are joined by pianist Piers Lane for Elgar's sublime Piano Quintet, a large-scale work of almost orchestral sonority. These masterpieces are accompanied by four previously unrecorded works for solo piano.

GOLDNER STRING QUARTET
PIERS LANE



Compact Disc CDA67857

SAINT-SAËNS

ORGAN MUSIC VOLUME 2

British organist Andrew-John Smith once again brings his compelling artistry to the service of Camille Saint-Saëns. Smith's commanding sense of architecture, breathtaking musicality and astonishing control of dynamics and nuance is thrilling. As with Volume 1, this disc provides a rare opportunity to hear Saint-Saëns's organ works played on the very instrument for which they were composed – the magnificent Cavallé-Coll at La Madeleine, Paris.

ANDREW-JOHN SMITH
ORGAN OF LA MADELEINE, PARIS



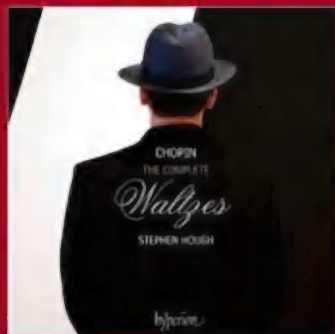
Compact Disc CDA67815

hyperion

CHOPIN THE COMPLETE WALTZES

Stephen Hough has a unique affinity for the music of Chopin, whose music has always been a central part of his repertoire. Hough's name has become synonymous with pianistic elegance, flawless technique and immense musicianship and he has become globally renowned for his engaging and refined Chopin interpretations. In his published Waltzes Chopin brought a new level of sophistication to this popular dance form. His unpublished Waltzes display considerable wit and charm, qualities ideally suited to Hough's pianism. The disc is rounded off with the famous E flat major Nocturne.

STEPHEN HOUGH

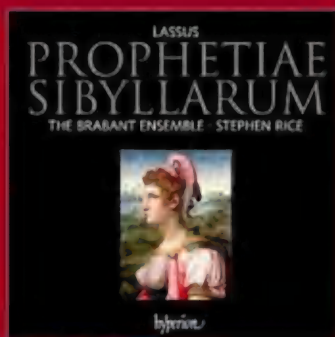


Compact Disc CDA67849

LISSUS PROPHETIAE SIBYLLARUM & MISSA AMOR ECCO COLEI

Orlande de Lassus was an undisputed master of all the vocal genres of the late Renaissance. This recording features the glorious polyphony of the *Missa Amor ecco colei* and *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, one of his most celebrated works. With their immaculate and instinctive performance style, Stephen Rice and The Brabant Ensemble prove the perfect advocates for this challenging music.

THE BRABANT ENSEMBLE
STEPHEN RICE



Compact Disc CDA67887

MOSCHELES COMPLETE CONCERT STUDIES

'Graceful, fluent and engagingly affectionate performances' (*Gramophone*)

PIERS LANE
PENALOSA MASSES

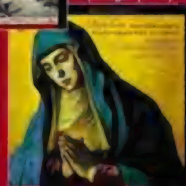
'A timely and revealing disc ... glorious and radiant sound' (*BBC Music Magazine*)

THE CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL
JAMES O'DONNELL



Compact Disc
CDH55326
(budget price)

Compact Disc
CDH55387
(budget price)



JOSQUIN MISSA PANGE LINGUA

'Wonderfully fresh and intelligently paced performances from a choir who can make 16th-century polyphony sound the most natural in the world' (*Gramophone*)

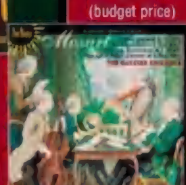
THE CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL / JAMES O'DONNELL
MOZART OBOE QUARTET
HORN QUINTET

'Ravishingly delightful' (*American Record Guide*)
THE GAUDIER ENSEMBLE



Compact Disc
CDH55390
(budget price)

Compact Disc
CDH55374
(budget price)



REVIEWS

**ORCHESTRAL**

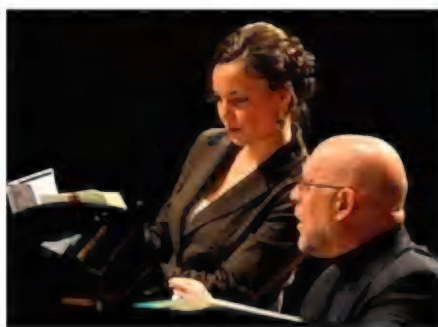
Kenneth Woods voices his
passion for Hans Gál
54

**CHAMBER**

The Tippet Quartet stand out
in Stephen Dodgson
62

**INSTRUMENTAL**

Storm and stress: Khatia Buniatishvili
serves up Liszt with adrenaline
68

**VOCAL**

Martina Janková voyages through song
with pianist Gérard Wyss
72

**OPERA**

A nuptial *buffa* by Rossini
captured live in Germany
80

**DVD AND BLU-RAY**

This is their moment:
Billy Budd in Sussex
86

RECORDING OF THE MONTH

Abbado uncovers the inner
truths of *Fidelio*
80

REPLAY

Unreleased Glenn Gould broadcasts lead our
round-up of historic and reissued discs
90

BOOKS

Biographies of George Gershwin
and Richard Strauss
94

KEY TO SYMBOLS

- Ⓡ Reissue
- Ⓜ Historic
- Ⓢ Compact disc (number of discs in set)
- Ⓣ Text(s) included
- Ⓣ translation(s) included

- Ⓢ Synopsis included
- Ⓝ Notes included
- Ⓢ subtitles included
- Ⓢ SACD
- Ⓢ DVD audio
- Ⓢ DVD video
- Ⓢ Blu-ray
- Ⓢ Download

- Ⓢ VHS cassette
- Ⓢ no longer available
- Ⓢ all available separately
- Ⓢ only available separately
- Ⓢ £11 and over
- Ⓢ £8 to £10.99
- Ⓢ £6 to £7.99
- Ⓢ £5.99 and below



Editor's Choice
See page 12



Pay a visit to the *Gramophone Player* at
www.gramophone.co.uk to hear excerpts
from this month's Editor's Choice discs
as well as other featured recordings

Orchestral

More Bruckner from Janowski • Muhly's electric violin concerto • 'Period' Saint-Saëns

JS Bach

Four Orchestral Suites, BWV1066-69

Dirk Vandaele *vm*

Il Fondamento / Paul Dombrecht

Fuga Libera (F) ② FUG580 (103' • DDD)

**'Formative' leaner scorings only
fully firing in the Second Suite**



There is novelty value in this seriously conceived set of Bach's four Orchestral Suites: Paul Dombrecht draws on the theory of formative versions that existed in

chamber scorings before Bach settled on the now-familiar scorings from Leipzig. In essence, this means a second suite from Bach's Cöthen years, without a solo flute, and the third and fourth without trumpets and drums. The results are both surprising and disappointing in equal measure for those who are used to hearing these fine occasional works in their most celebratory garments. The Second – most dramatically shorn of its instrumental identity (a greater emblem of early-18th-century wind ambition is hard to find) – is presented in the original key of A minor, down a tone and yet resonating with such remarkable personality, sinewy vigour and corporate flair that the solo violin becomes almost as effective a *primus inter pares* as the fashionable flute of the late 1730s.

If the streamlined readings shed new light on this work, this is partly down to the spirited and spontaneous musicianship of Il Fondamento; they may not be the most polished of ensembles, in matters of blend and tuning especially, but they bring a dialect of warmth and spirited engagement to each dance, both here and in the First Suite. Lack of bite in the "remplissage" (the viola lines which bring such elevated direction to proceedings) is noticeable in the First Suite, the only work which remains identical to Bach's later source.

The absence of both trumpets and oboes in the famous Third Suite exposes the ensemble rather more alarmingly, except in a satisfyingly gamey Air, the note misleadingly suggesting the missing instruments were "not given independent parts". The opening of both this and the Fourth Suite reveals (clearly to those who know the usual versions) what new melodic attributes, however economically used, were later superimposed by Bach. The

problem, however, stems not just from less effective scoring but a rather driven approach in the D major suites that can exhaust in both unvarying articulation and unyielding dynamic. This two-CD set is a game of two halves, maybe, but apart from the Second Suite in this guise, this is perhaps for reference only. **Jonathan Freeman-Attwood**

Barber • Walton

Barber Violin Concerto. Adagio for Strings, Op 11
Walton Violin Concerto.

Henry V - 2 Pieces for Strings

Thomas Bowes *vm*

Malmö Opera Orchestra / Joseph Swensen

Signum (F) SIGCD238 (66' • DDD)

**Soloist and conductor on the
money and inside the idiom**



Thomas Bowes, best known as an orchestral leader and founder member of the Maggini Quartet, shows his mettle as a formidable virtuoso in these deeply

felt readings of two violin concertos that share much. The added string pieces complete what might be regarded as an ideal coupling.

What is so remarkable about Bowes as a soloist is not just his technical assurance, his flawless intonation over the widest range, tonal and dynamic, but his natural feeling for warmly romantic expressiveness. The Walton concerto, written for Heifetz in 1938-9, emerges more than ever as the most romantic of his works, gloriously melodic yet with a bite of intensity in the characteristically jazzy passages, here beautifully played not just by Bowes but by the Malmö orchestra, credited with working for the Opera but clearly related to the ensemble that has made distinguished recordings for BIS.

Joseph Swensen also shows his natural sympathy for the Walton idiom, both in the lyrical and jazzily syncopated writing. His slinky *rubato* in the *Alla Napolitana* section of the second movement *Scherzo* is a delight, and his expressiveness exactly matches that of his soloist. It is a measure of the richness of Walton's invention that the luscious theme, which arrives as the second subject in the finale, is hardly referred to again and is replaced in the recapitulation with the opening theme of the whole work, this time in parallel sixths – a favourite device of Walton.

I suspect that the richness of lyricism in this work, even compared with others of the 1930s, reflects Walton's happiness in setting up home with his beloved Alice, Lady Wimborne, whose husband seems to have minded not at all that his wife had a young and brilliant lover. Walton told me more than once that his music regularly reflected his love-affairs.

Bowes is equally warm and expressive in the Barber, and there, interestingly, he takes note of the "Allegro" marking in the first movement, when most violinists luxuriate in a relaxed tempo. Bowes in no way sounds rushed, yet keeps the music moving. Barber's central movement, unlike Walton's *Scherzo*, is a genuine slow movement, with the soloist entering only after the oboe has introduced the movement's main theme, which is finally given to the soloist much later – rather reflecting the procedure in the slow movement of Brahms's Violin Concerto.

Notoriously, the soloist for whom the work was originally commissioned found the dazzling *moto perpetuo* finale too difficult to play and the first performance in Philadelphia was given instead by the veteran Albert Spalding. Needless to say, Bowes has no trouble coping with the fierceness of the writing, and rounds off his performance with a delightfully pointed pay-off.

As for the string pieces which come as valuable supplements, Swensen's readings could not be more refined. Walton's two little *Henry V* pieces come at a sustained, intense pianissimo throughout, while Barber's celebrated Adagio is similarly hushed and intense until the great climax and pause after six minutes, so intensifying the elegiac quality. The Signum sound is excellent with good balance between soloist and orchestra with ample detail and a bloom on the sound that helps to co-ordinate the most complex textures without muddying the result. Altogether a resounding success, making one hope for more recordings from the same source.

Edward Greenfield

Beethoven

'Gods, Heroes and Men'

Symphony No 3, 'Eroica', Op 55.

The Creatures of Prometheus, Op 43 – excerpts

Montreal Symphony Orchestra / Kent Nagano

Sony (F) 88697 85737-2 (74' • DDD)

**Beethoven in heroic mode falls prey
to a somewhat bland conception**



"Gods, Heroes and Men" is the title of this disc. Thematically it is concerned with the legend of Prometheus; musically it centres on the *Eroica* Symphony,

framed by five movements from the incidental music Beethoven wrote for Salvatore Viganò's ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* in Vienna in 1801 and (if you have the wherewithal to download the tracks onto a computer) some brief thoughts about Prometheus by *Life of Pi* author Yann Martel.

Orchestra and conductor are at their best in the *Prometheus* ballet music extracts. Nagano's use of the full orchestra might seem a touch weighty for such music, particularly when heard in so sombre an acoustic. But the direction is exacting, the playing determined and spruce.

The *Eroica* is conducted in traditional style. There is no metronome-mongering in the opening movement, which Nagano takes at a moderate but forward-moving 52 bars to the minute, after the manner of Bruno Walter or other like-minded masters. Unfortunately, the performance has none of their concentration or insight. The mighty opening movement is full of arresting detail, dramatic cruces and terror-laden acts of arrival; yet in this performance, where the conductor's reading appears to be poorly articulated on the orchestra, nothing really registers.

The orchestra, I suspect, simply hasn't established a proper sound palette for Beethoven. Horns are persistently reticent, the trumpets too loud. The latter may be a fault of this particular recording but the former seems to be part of a wider problem with a wind choir which, some solo moments apart, sounds surprisingly bland.

Richard Osborne

Brahms · Schoenberg

Brahms String Quartet No 1, Op 51 No 1

Schoenberg Verklärte Nacht, Op 4

Amsterdam Sinfonietta / Candida Thompson

Channel Classics © PTC5186 370 (66' • DDD/DSD)

Schoenberg – selected comparison:

BPO, Karajan (1/09) (TEST) SBT1431

An intense performance of Schoenberg, plus Brahms's transfigured string quartet



If only Brahms and Schoenberg had really met, rather than through the tenuous agency of Zemlinsky. "That's how it's done, from Bach to me," Brahms remarked to Zemlinsky while they were looking at a Mozart Quintet. Schoenberg said much the same, and in this striking coupling they do meet – around 1885, I'd say, when Schoenberg was 11 and Brahms was 52.

From its subdued introduction onwards, this *Verklärte Nacht* seems directly to oppose (how Schoenbergian) the old Viennese slight that it sounded like a page of *Tristan* with the ink smeared. The confession theme is delicately elaborated, and with purer tone than we often hear. The move to E major (6'47") brings a feeling of space rather than an actual broadening of tempo, and the Amsterdam Sinfonietta's phrasing is internally supple throughout an interpretation that yields little in intensity to older, weighty recordings. I'd even place it in the same league as the Brahms-Schoenberg encounter brokered by an ailing Karajan, live at the Royal Festival Hall in 1988.

The expansion and sombre realisation of the C minor Quartet throws the work forwards, just as the *Verklärte Nacht* looks backwards, to the C minor Symphony, though it's the Second Symphony that is most explicitly prefigured by the winding, ecstatic violin line from 4'20" in the second movement; and as that line subsides, so inevitably the loss of a single, pliant instrumental voice is keenly felt. In the quicker movements, the gestures may become more general as they increase in size but they take on a different character, not less intense, if anything more so, thanks to some phenomenally alert responses on the part of the Amsterdam Sinfonietta and a recording quality of comparable range and depth.

Peter Quantrill

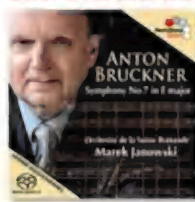
Bruckner

Symphony No 7 (Nowak edition)

Suisse Romande Orchestra / Marek Janowski

Pentatone © PTC5186 370 (66' • DDD/DSD)

Janowski and his fine-tuned orchestra offer a further instalment in a fine cycle



If, back in the 1960s, I would have predicted that in 50 years' time the then acid-toned Suisse Romande Orchestra would prove near-ideal performers of Bruckner,

I doubt that many would have taken me seriously. And yet that is precisely how things have turned out. Marek Janowski has forged an instrument that projects Bruckner's richly textured canvases with a combination of warmth, transparency and tonal weight, the brass sounding particularly impressive.

Here, in the Seventh (1885 version, ed Nowak), the first, third and fourth movements work best. In the first, tempo relations are very well judged, with shifts of pulse that tell but that never disrupt the flow. And there's so much well-observed detail. For example, the important role that *pizzicato* strings play from around 14'46" and the way lower strings are balanced soon afterwards; then the clarity of texture as the music soars

skywards with violins for wings (those wonderful "flying" figurations), and the gentle jog-trot as the principal theme returns, the brass interjecting dramatically whenever they need to. Janowski speeds towards the coda, which broadens appreciably when it arrives, a perfectly formed arch.

The *Adagio* is perhaps just a mite less compelling, its transitions marginally less natural though the percussion-capped climax is impressive enough. The *Scherzo* is again superb, the string bands fluent and sumptuous, especially in the Trio, while Janowski opens the finale purposefully, pointing the strings' motif with precision. Note how carefully he attends to matters of texture, colour and internal balancing, always with an impeccable ear, varying tempi with musical justification, even the significantly broadened closing pages, which I have to admit came as a bit of a shock. But it works.

Pentatone has provided Janowski and his Geneva forces with excellent sound. This is yet another significant step towards what I am convinced will eventually turn out to be one of the finest recorded Bruckner cycles of the 21st century. **Rob Cowan**

Casella

Sinfonia (Symphony No 3), Op 63.

Elegia eroica, Op 29

Rome Symphony Orchestra /

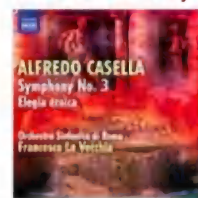
Francesco La Vecchia

Naxos © 8 572415 (62' • DDD)

Sym – selected comparison:

WDR SO, Cologne, Francis (CPO) CPO777 265-2

Casella's Third contains echoes of the 20th century's symphonic greats



As presented here, Alfredo Casella's musical language is imposing, his structures formidable and, in the case of the enormously exciting march-threnody *Elegia*

eroica, "to the memory of a soldier killed in the [First] war", both powerful and, towards its close, deeply contemplative. But the principal work is the broad-shouldered, 46-minute Third Symphony that Casella started composing in 1939, a commission from Frederick Stock for the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and truly representative of the conflicts and contradictions that were at the cold heart of Mussolini's Italy...and of Casella's attitude to it, as David Gallagher's perceptive note makes abundantly clear. Here was a man who, although married to a Jewish woman, aligned his thinking with Il Duce and his minions; and, while he did eventually see the error of his thoughts, they took their time changing.

The added irony is that years earlier Casella had been commissioned by Mahler (Jewish, of course) to arrange his Seventh

Orchestral reviews

Symphony for piano duet, and you can indeed hear echoes of Mahler's Seventh Symphony at around 7'28" into Casella's sizeable finale. The *Scherzo* is at times a dead ringer for the *Scherzo* of Mahler's Sixth or of Shostakovich's Fifth but even more surprising are the striking premonitions of Prokofiev's Sixth Symphony at around 6'24" into the often beautiful second movement (similarly Casella's use of the piano). Honegger is another stylistic point of reference, so what we have here is a sort of musical temperature gauge, a gauge that simultaneously clocks the overall mood of the period.

La Vecchia's Rome performance is pretty good as far as it goes, which isn't very far at the sensitively scored start of the second movement (solo violin and woodwinds), where the violinist's intonation is somewhat suspect. Alun Francis has also prepared a very good Casella Third Symphony (CPO, with *Italia*, Op 11) but one lives in hope that Gianandrea Noseda and the BBC Philharmonic, whose account of the Second Symphony (Chandos, 8/10) was so fine, will in due course grant us their interpretation of the Third. It's a compelling piece and deserves strong, well-played advocacy; but those who have been investing in the Naxos Casella series certainly need not hold back. **Rob Cowan**

Dvořák

Symphony No 8, Op 88 B163.

Symphonic Variations, Op 78 B70

London Philharmonic Orchestra /

Sir Charles Mackerras

LPO @ LPO0055 (60' • DDD)

Recorded live at the Royal Festival Hall, London,

April 24, 1992

Sym – selected comparison:

Philb Orch, Mackerras (4/10) (SIGN) SIGCD183

Czech PO, Mackerras (SUPR) SU3848-2

LPO, Mackerras (C.FP) 575761-2

A live Eighth that precedes Mackerras's studio version with the LPO by days



Sir Charles Mackerras's way with Dvořák's Eighth Symphony was invariably unaffected, bracing and energetic, and this live relay is no exception. To my

knowledge, there are four Mackerras options to choose from. The first to be released (on Classics for Pleasure) was recorded at Henry Wood Hall, London, merely days after this concert recording from the Royal Festival Hall, which dates from late April 1992. Then there was a live Supraphon version from the Smetana Hall in 2005 with the Prague Symphony Orchestra and, lastly, a return to the Royal Festival Hall, this time with the Philharmonia, for a vigorous 2008 outing issued by Signum. Mackerras was nothing if

not consistent in his approach to the work; indeed, one of the principal differences between this CD and the others is not specifically musical but concerns the issue of recorded balance, which grants great prominence to the timps and brass. More important perhaps, in purely musical terms, is the added intensity that Mackerras brings to the *Adagio*, especially the passage 6'51" – in where the strings quieten to a shimmering murmur and the horns cry out an anguished version of the opening motif (the strings' response is also incredibly moving). The rest is boisterous, dramatic and, in the Trio of the *Allegretto grazioso*, warmly affectionate – in other words, fairly characteristic of a familiar approach.

Both Supraphon and Signum couple the Eighth Symphony with the Seventh. The CFP recording is released as part of an all-Dvořák double-pack that includes the three last symphonies, the violin Romance and the Symphonic Variations. Mackerras always directed the latter with consummate mastery, edging from one variation to the next with evident ease, making the work sound the compelling entity that it is, though I would hesitate to agree with annotator Stephen Johnson, who claims that it's "generally acknowledged to be the finest set of variations in any format". Hold on...what about the *Goldbergs* and the *Diabelli*? Still, if you're talking purely orchestral variations, I'd certainly rate Dvořák's alongside Elgar's *Enigma* and Reger's *Hiller* set. I'd also say that, viewed overall, this is probably the best Mackerras version of them that we have, though both the contemporaneous CFP LPO recording and the 2001 Czech Philharmonic option for Supraphon run it pretty close and both are better balanced as sound. The choice, as they say, is yours. **Rob Cowan**

Fagerlund

Clarinet Concerto¹. Partita. Isola

¹Christoffer Sundqvist / Gothenburg Symphony

Orchestra / Dima Slobodeniouk

BIS (F) 99. BIS-SACD1707 (59' • DDD/DSD)

The energetic and eclectic music of Finnish composer Sebastian Fagerlund



Forty next year, Sebastian Fagerlund is nothing if not a communicative spirit. On early acquaintance, he seems to be not so enamoured of the dark side as the Finnish stereotype dictates. Even the slow movement of the Clarinet Concerto (2005-06) is nowhere near as forbidding as its title "The Silent Shadow" would suggest. Overall he comes across as a more listener-friendly cousin to Magnus Lindberg: energetic, punchy and eclectic but with a question mark over musical substance.

Unlike Lindberg, Fagerlund does not shy away from long pedal-points and ostinatos à la John Adams – short-cuts to effectiveness that may be a source of impatience to ears accustomed to Aho, Saariaho, or indeed Lindberg. He is also rather over-fond of the sighing gestures of MacMillan's *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* (or perhaps those of Lutosławski's *Livre*, from which MacMillan's derive).

By the time I reached the Partita, I knew from the movement-titles – "Cerimonia", "Risonanza" and "Preghiera" – pretty much what to expect and I was not disappointed (or, rather, I was). The long introductory first movement of *Isola* strikes me as rather more substantial, precisely because darker forces challenge its progress and provoke more multi-layered musical thinking. I like the way the concluding *Agitato capriccioso* pauses for thought, because before that it too feels like rather an easy way out. Dedicated performances and fine recording quality give the music every chance to speak. **David Fanning**

Hindemith • Honegger • Martinů

Hindemith Cello Concerto (1940) Honegger

Cello Concerto Martinů Cello Concerto No 1, H196

Johannes Moser / German Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Saarbrücken and Kaiserslautern

Hänssler Classic (F) CD93 276 (63' • DDD)

Honegger – selected comparison:

Poltéra, Malmi SO, Ollila-Hannikainen

(2/08) (BIS) BIS-CD1617

Hindemith – selected comparisons:

Geringas, Queensland SO, Albert (2/98) (CPO) CPO999 375-2

Wallfisch, BBC PO, YP Tortelier (3/93) (CHAN) CHAN9124

P Tortelier, Czech PO, Ančerl (12/59) (SUPR) 11 1955-2

Martinů – selected comparison:

Wallfisch, Czech PO, Bělobrádek

(4/92, 12/09) (CHAN) CHAN10547

Three of the finest 20th-century cello concertos in fascinating juxtaposition



The most popular modern cello concertos tend to be lyric-dramatic, works that appear to tell a story, such as Elgar's,

Shostakovich's First, Myaskovsky's. The three works performed here by Johannes Moser have their roots in more Classical models, their expressive purpose arising from but in balance with their architectural-structural concerns.

Honegger's Concerto (1929) is the earliest and by some way briefest of the three. Its winning opening lyrical idea recurs at key points, providing thematic unity. Martinů's First Concerto followed a year later but was twice revised (1939 and 1955). Like Hindemith's (1940), its three-movement format is more traditional in ethos,

Kenneth Woods:
a committed
performance

Gál's revival CONTINUES

More treats from the Viennese Scot

Gál • Schumann

Gál Symphony No 3, Op 62

Schumann Symphony No 3, 'Rhenish', Op 97

Orchestra of the Swan / Kenneth Woods

Avie © AV2230 (67 • DDD)

Schumann – selected comparison:

Zürich Tonhalle Orch, Zinman (5/04) (ARTN)

82876 57743-2



Hard on the heels of Avie's premiere recording of Gál's First Symphony (coupled with Schubert's Sixth and conducted by Thomas

Zehetmair, 8/11) comes – with almost indecent haste – No 3 (1951-52). Yet curiously, Woods's Third is the first volume in a Gál symphony cycle: No 2, again under Zehetmair's direction, will have been released already by the time you read this. It is unclear if he will complete the set but Kenneth Woods will record all four for Avie over the next few years.

The Third Symphony is one of Gál's more unusual designs, its three movements concealing beneath their conventional-sounding exteriors some thoughtful re-takes on Classical models, for example the extremes of moods – lyrical, pastoral and passionate – in the opening span, a fine example incidentally of Gál's innate structural genius. Passion of a different sort

informs the final *Allegro molto moderato*, where the composer's contrapuntal mastery is once again manifest. In between comes a lovely *Andante tranquillo e placido*, the perfect foil for the outer movements. Kenneth Woods, who provided exemplary support to Annette-Barbara Vogel in the concertos and Suite (9/10), shows equal sympathy in a committed performance of a work that grows on me with each hearing.

Schumann's *Rhenish* provides both effective contrast and context for the tradition Gál was exploring and extending

100 years on. It also provides a surer measure of the quality of the Orchestra of the Swan's capabilities, especially when compared with any of the many rival accounts in the repertoire. My favourite remains Zinman's, stronger in profile (compare the opening *Lebhaft* and the penultimate *Feierlich*) and with just that much more depth and power. None the less, Woods provides a strong reading and the disc as a whole, with splendid sound, is warmly recommended.

Guy Rickards

INTERVIEW

Kenneth Woods

There was a sense 30 or 40 years ago, towards the end of Gál's career, that it wasn't OK for him to be writing the music that he was writing. This sort of lyricism and melodiousness wasn't just out of fashion, it was *verboten*. If you look back at the 20th century now, you can see that the opposite seems true. What makes it an interesting period is the diversity of what was going on in every decade...You had Rachmaninov and Schoenberg, Messiaen and Shostakovich, Boulez and Hans Gál all writing at the same time. Gál's music is so unapologetically what it is, it doesn't concede anything to the trends of the time.

There are certainly "Gállisms", yes – he has a way of reminding you who you're listening to that all great composers have. When you hear his music for the first time it's easy to label it post-Romantic – a language we know. But actually, very much

like Haydn, he makes you think you know the language but the next chord is often not the one you were expecting or the repetition of a phrase is harmonised in a way that you would never have guessed.

If you look at the middle movements of the two Third symphonies by Gál and Schumann, you can see a lot of similarities. At the heart of the Schumann there's music that's very delicate and wistful; there's a lot of deep emotion in it but it's not anguished and it's not extroverted. It's the same in the Gál. That sense of being able to say very personal things in the character of a miniature or intermezzo is something that they share. And both composers write for the orchestra as chamber music – all Gál is chamber music and that's why it works so well with a chamber orchestra like the Orchestra of the Swan.

Interview by Andrew Mellor

Orchestral reviews

fast-slow-fast, and the heart of both lies in their central slow spans. Both are more complex than they at first seem.

Moser's playing is technically adroit and he has audibly tuned in to each composer's idiom. From his brief introductory note it is clear he sympathises with their individuality of approach and refusal to kowtow to serialism, though their example was followed by rather more creators than he gives credit for. The grouping is a revealing one none the less and Moser's accounts are competitive without being first choices. His lightness, at times thinness, of tone is a disadvantage, cf Poltéra's Honegger. Wallfisch with Yan Pascal Tortelier is peerless among modern interpreters in the Martinů and I prefer him also in the Hindemith (though Paul Tortelier remains my top choice). Geringas's programme of all three Hindemith concertos has obvious appeal but Moser's has a more focused context. Hänssler's fine sound makes this an attractive alternative version for all three works.

Guy Rickards

Korngold

Symphony, Op 40. Tänzchen im alten Stil
Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra /
John Storgårds

Online ⑤ ODE11822 (61' • DDD)

Sym – selected comparison:

Strasbourg PO, Albrecht (4/11) (PENT) PTC5186 373

Korngold's ripe, romantic symphony and an old-style dance's premiere recording



This new CD joins a select handful of fine recordings of this late-Romantic symphony, of which Marc Albrecht's vibrant account is still fresh in the mind. As an ensemble, there's no doubt that the Helsinki Philharmonic is on a par with Albrecht's Strasbourg orchestra but John Storgårds makes heavy weather of Korngold's writing, stretching out the long paragraphs on his broad symphonic canvas to the point where the symphony often seems becalmed, the ideas outstaying their welcome. Instead of drawing in the composer's prolix writing, Storgårds is indulgent to the point where each new idea seems over-parted from the last.

Dance in the Old Style, scored for a smaller ensemble, is a charming antidote to what has gone before. This work from the youthful Korngold (in its world premiere recording) inhabits the world of Strauss's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* so, although there are no characteristic grand romantic gestures, the orchestra play this dance with an affection and lightness of touch that makes it fresh and appealing.

Adrian Edwards

Mozart

'Complete Fortepiano Concertos'

Piano Concertos Nos 1-27 (including No 7 for Three Pianos, 'Lodron', K242^a; No 10 for Two Pianos, K365^b). Three Keyboard Concertos, K107. Rondos – K382; K386

Viviana Sofronitsky *fp/bpd* with ^{ab}Linda Nicholson, ^aMario Aschauer *fps* Musica Antiqua Collegium Varsoviense / Tadeusz Karolak
Et'cetera ⑤ ⑪ KTC1424 (14h 7' • DDD)

From Pro Musica Camerata 041/51

Full cycle – selected comparisons:

Immerseel, Anima Eterna (ZIG) UCSBOX10

Bilson, Gardiner (ARCH) 463111 2

Mozart's piano concertos in inconsistent performances on period instruments



Recorded in 2004-06, this Mozart piano concerto cycle first appeared on the small Pro Musica Camerata label. In the main, fortepianist Viviana Sofronitsky (stepdaughter of the legendary Russian pianist Vladimir), conductor Tadeusz Karolak and the Musica Antiqua Collegium Varsoviense offer less consistent satisfaction in comparison with complete period instrument sets from Bilson/Gardiner/English Baroque Soloists (DG) and Immerseel/Anima Eterna Orchestra (Channel Classics). The strings prove alarmingly uneven: scrawny-toned in K503's Rondo, hideously ill-tuned in K595's first movement, yet firmly focused in the sparsely scored K413, 414 and 415 group and the youthful first four concertos, where Sofronitsky's nimble harpsichord mastery oozes sparkle and wit. However, her fortepiano artistry yields mixed results. Her heavy-handed articulation, pounded out Alberti basses and crude down-beat accents rob certain Rondo movements of their prerequisite animation and lilt, such as those in K271, 450, 459, 482 and 595. And when you juxtapose her brusque, dynamically unvaried treatment of the latter's *Larghetto* with Bilson's graceful lyricism, her faster basic tempo actually seems slower.

Orchestrally speaking, little sense of long line and amorphous melody/accompaniment textures yield rudderless slow movements in K271 and K456 while, at the same time, the rich contrapuntal writing in the *Adagio* of K488 could hardly be more vibrant and robust; the first bassoonist really shines here and in the *Allegro assai*'s rapid solo licks. Strange how percussively the busy passagework in the outer movements of the E flat Double Concerto (K365) registers, whereas the more difficult-to-balance Triple Concerto (K242) benefits from superior microphone placement. Could the latter hold true for the vigorous, incisive K451 performance, as well as the D minor

K466 and D major K537, where Sofronitsky's range of nuance and expression noticeably opens up? She provides simple descriptive notes for the works on each individual disc, while an essay by Jan Weber provides a good general overview of Mozart's achievements in the genre. In short, this cycle's best performances are well worth hearing; but, if you want a period-instrument Mozart concerto cycle, the Bilson/Gardiner edition remains first choice for superior artistic finesse and more judiciously balanced engineering. **Jed Distler**

Muhly

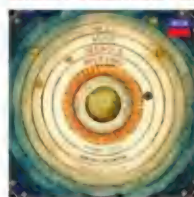
Muhly Seeing is Believing^a. Motion. By All Means. Step Team Byrd Miserere mei. Bow Thine Ear Gibbons This is the Record of John (all arr Muhly)

^aThomas Gould *elec vn*

Aurora Orchestra / Nicholas Collon

Decca ⑤ 478 2731DH (73' • DDD)

An electric violin concerto by this much-vaunted American composer



Decca is clearly intent on putting its weight behind Nico Muhly (30 this year), this third release of his music focusing on works for chamber orchestra, with

Seeing is Believing a notable contribution to the electric violin concerto repertoire. Using the solo instrument's inherently "wiry" timbre for a range of textural and harmonic layering, Muhly builds a piece of some impact – though neither the recourse to tried (rather "tired"?) and tested minimalist routines to increase momentum nor the overly affected credential writing towards the close suggest a deeper intent. Hardly the fault of Thomas Gould, who evinces undoubted empathy with the instrument, nor the Aurora Orchestra and Nicholas Collon, who dispatch its tests of ensemble securely. *Step Team* is even more exacting, yet here the main interest is in listening to how the players negotiate the music rather than its intrinsic content; at least until the coda streamlines the texture so what remains can exude a degree of pathos.

Perhaps due to their relative brevity, *Motion* and *By All Means* seem more satisfying: the former a pithy study in rhythmic punning, the latter suffuses an unlikely take on Weelkes and Webern with an unpredictability intriguing in its deft provocation. Less inventive though hardly less resourceful than, say, Adès's Couperin transcriptions, the Elizabethan realisations are tailor-made encores ensembles such as the Aurora no doubt seize upon gratefully. John Rutter's production, together with the informative notes and stylish packaging, enhance a disc that can hardly be faulted for first impressions. **Richard Whitehouse**

Rachmaninov

Piano Concertos – No 1, Op 1; No 4, Op 40. Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op 43
Simon Trpčeski *pf* **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra** / **Vasily Petrenko**
 Avie Ⓢ AV2191 (77' • DDD)

A pianist and conductor who were surely born to play Rachmaninov's concertos



Trpčeski, Petrenko and the RLPO here join forces for the eagerly awaited follow-up to their Avie recording of Rachmaninov's Second and Third Piano

Concertos (4/10). Expectations are fully realised in performances of the highest order. Listening to the earlier disc, it was clear that Trpčeski was put on this earth to play this music and Petrenko to conduct it. The RLPO's sound has been finely fashioned to Rachmaninov's needs; it phrases with a breadth, warmth and sensibility that form an ideal counterpart to the piano's solo role.

Rachmaninov himself spoke of the "youthful freshness" that he retained in the 1917 revision of the 1890-91 First Concerto and that is precisely the quality that comes through here, coupled with Trpčeski's mature, judicious, thoroughly natural way of coaxing out the music's melodic content, and his phenomenal command of the concerto's bravura demands – demands that he meets with such a well-chosen kaleidoscope of colour and wondrous variety of touch. In the Fourth Concerto (here played in the customary "definitive" version of 1941) the aura of nostalgia and brooding is voiced with a rare understanding of the music's light and shade and its ominous undercurrents. These are offset by firmly harnessed energy and expressive subtleties, which in the *Paganini* Rhapsody fuel a luminous performance of delicacy, sparkle and poignancy. This is a riveting disc, another major landmark for Trpčeski and one on which Rachmaninov finds interpreters thoroughly attuned to his emotional world. **Geoffrey Norris**

Reger

Romances, Op 50. Concerto for Violin, Op 101.
 Aria, Op 103a No 3
Kolja Lessing *vm*
Göttingen Symphony Orchestra / **Christoph Mathias Mueller**
 Telos Ⓢ TLS097 (78' • DDD)

Reger the lyricist in a further argument for the composer's reassessment



Reger's enormous Violin Concerto had a troubled performance history and lay fallow until Adolf Busch took it up again in the 1940s after completing a simpler,

more transparent re-orchestration that Reger knew was necessary. Busch, who had played the slow movement at Reger's funeral, believed the Concerto deserved a place in the repertoire alongside the greatest. His re-orchestration, then, was a labour of love and respect; read about it in Tully Potter's comprehensive Busch biography and hear it here, in its excellent first recording, by the forces responsible for the German premiere in 2009.

"Slavishly exact copies of old forms... distended into monstrous growths" has been the gist of received ideas about Reger. Clear it all away and consider instead other opinions: Schoenberg named Reger as one of the modern "progressive" composers from whom he had learnt the most, and Tovey described him as "a consummate rhetorician...his texture is inevitably thick but it is astonishingly sonorous." Berg too was an admirer.

Busch's judgment was over-generous, coloured no doubt by his friendship with Reger. The Concerto is certainly not fault-free – over-discursive rather than just too long (56', but the Elgar is not that much shorter), and you notice this in the endings of the first and last movements, which sound contrived, as if the composer were writing a letter or had looked at his watch and thought, heavens, I'd better close. But the piece is likeable for being confident in itself: full of invention and solid German craft (a virtue in my book), always doing something, the notes meant, not manufactured; and it gives the impression of having been a pleasure to write. There is variety of colour and mood, from the lyrical and inward to the impassioned, the noble and the playful – and there are no fugues. The downsides are the unwillingness to embrace the discipline of economy as a force, and the tethering of the construction and quite a lot of the detail to their model – the Brahms Violin Concerto – which Reger clearly loved to bits. His devotion to it is touching but sometimes a hindrance, one feels, when you sense him looking over his shoulder for Brahms's approval, the model not transcended.

Tovey was right about the sonorousness: whatever retouchings Busch made, the sound is tremendous. High praise is due to Kolja Lessing, a fine soloist, and all the performers, whose commitment to the piece is evident. The North German Radio recording pleases too, a couple of perceptible edits notwithstanding. Reger, although not a violinist himself, wrote much for the instrument, beginning in 1900 with the two Romances included here that share their title and opus number with the pair by Beethoven. If you have never believed in his lyrical gift, sample the Aria, the last track on the disc, which is an orchestration of one of the numbers from a suite for violin and piano. When Reger tried, he could really sing at you.

Stephen Plaistow

Reichenauer

Oboe Concerto in G[♯]. Violin Concerto in C[♭].
 Bassoon Concertos^c – in C; in G. Double
 Concerto for Oboe and Bassoon in B flat^d.
 Overture in B flat
^{ad}Xenia Löffler *ob* ^{cd}Sergio Azzolini *bn* ^bLenka
 Torgersen *vm* **Collegium 1704** / **Václav Luks**
 Supraphon Ⓢ SU4035-2 (67' • DDD)

Reichenauer

Flute Concerto in G[♯]. Oboe Concerto in B flat^b.
 Violin Concerto in G[♯]. Cello Concerto in D
 minor^d. Overture in B flat. Sonata in D
^aMarek Špelina *f* ^bLuise Haugk *ob* ^aJana
 Chytilová *vm* **Musica Florea** / **Marek Štryncl** ^d*vc*
 Supraphon Ⓢ SU4056-2 (63' • DDD)

Fluent and appealing concertos by an obscure 18th-century Bohemian figure



Minor Baroque composers don't come much more obscure than the Bohemian Antonín Reichenauer. Even his date and place of birth remain a mystery.



Virtually all we know about his shadowy career is that he succeeded Johann Fasch as house composer to Count Wenzel Morzin in Prague about 1722

(Haydn wrote his earliest symphonies for a member of the same family), and died in his mid-thirties in the provincial town of Jindřichův Hradec in 1730.

On the evidence of the assorted concertos and "overtures" (ie orchestral suites) on these two discs, Reichenauer's was a fluent, likeable, if not specially distinctive talent. The concertos he wrote for the virtuoso players in Morzin's crack ensemble emerge as Vivaldi-lite, with hints of the emerging *galant* style: bustling, neatly crafted, but without the Italian's coruscating energy, waywardness and genius for the striking gesture. Fast movements too often rely on the same clichéd sequences, though Reichenauer can tap an affecting vein of doleful sentiment in minor-key slow movements like that in the G major Oboe Concerto. Perhaps the most fetching music comes in the two Gallic-flavoured dance suites, especially the serene – and decidedly *galant* – oboe-led *Andante* and lusty final Minuet in the suite performed by Musica Florea.

Although bass lines are not always ideally buoyant, both Prague period bands are lively and personable. Musica Florea's rather rawer, earthier sonority is well heard in the sturdy D minor Cello Concerto and the G major Violin Concerto, with its rustic drones. All the soloists play with skill and spirit, notably violinist Jana Chytilová, bold and athletic in the G major Concerto, oboist Xenia Löffler,

Orchestral reviews

eloquent in Reichenauer's melancholy *adagios*, and bassoonist Sergio Azzolini, excelling as acrobat and poet alike. Recorded sound on both discs is pleasantly reverberant, though I was initially disconcerted by the prominent tinkle of the Collegium 1704 harpsichord. Anyone who enjoys, say, the concertos of Fasch and Heinichen should find plenty of agreeable listening here. **Richard Wigmore**

Respighi

Aria. Rossiniana. Suite. Concerto for Violin.

Laura Marzadori *vn*

New York Chamber Orchestra /

Salvatore Di Vittorio

Naxos © 8572332 (77 • DDD)

Rossiniana – selected comparison:

Nosedà, BBC Phil (CHAN) (10/06) CHAN10388

Falletta, Buffalo PO (NAXO) (02/08) 8 557711

Early Respighi offerings completed and championed by a real advocate



Top billing goes to Salvatore Di Vittorio's completion of the Violin Concerto that the 24-year-old Respighi left unfinished in 1903,

having composed the first two movements and just a few bars of the finale. It hardly constitutes a major find, though the slow movement does eventually blossom into something beautiful – try the Tranquillo episode beginning at 5'14". Laura Marzadori proves a big-hearted, assertive soloist, though her tone is not always the most ingratiating.

The concerto is framed by Di Vittorio's transcriptions of the mellifluous Aria from 1901 (which Respighi incorporated seven years later into his Suite in G major for strings and organ) and the 1902 Suite for strings, the latter a pleasingly inventive creation whose second-movement "Siciliana" and concluding "Rigaudon" in particular suggest a more than passing acquaintance with Grieg's Holberg Suite. Di Vittorio secures a tidy response from his young New York band, but in the delicious 1925 suite *Rossiniana* I find myself craving greater refinement and corporate lustre – recent versions from the BBC and Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestras under Nosedà and Falletta respectively are far preferable. The up-front sound quickly tires the ear and there are also a handful of editing blips and studio noises with which to contend. Something of a mixed bag, then, though Respighi die-hards will want to sample it. **Andrew Achenbach**

Rózsa

'Orchestral Works, Vol 2'

Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op 4^a.

The Vintner's Daughter, Op 23a. Notturmo

ungherese, Op 28. Cello Concerto, Op 32^b

^aJennifer Pike *vn* ^bPaul Watkins *vc*

BBC Philharmonic / Rumon Gamba

Chandos © CHAN10674 (66 • DDD)



More concert music by a composer rather better known for his film scores



Miklós Rózsa, born in Budapest, was one of the most gifted of all the composers who moved from his homeland to Hollywood to write music for films (95 of them!). He was a natural melodist and scored for orchestra with great flair, and the Hungarian flavour of his music gave it a special edge and character.

Rózsa was especially impressive in variations, as the diverse and colourful *Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song* demonstrates. It features a *concertante* solo violin – the seductive Jennifer Pike, who is equally impressive in both the virtuosity and sweet lyricism of her solo role. *The Vintner's Daughter* (12 variations on a French folksong) was originally written for solo piano and it was Eugene Ormandy who commissioned the orchestral version, with its imaginative and highly contrasted instrumental colouring and tempi. The *Notturmo ungherese* again features a gentle solo clarinet at its opening but, spiced with a pair of passionate climaxes, it is a truly volatile Hungarian rhapsody.

The disquieting Cello Concerto was inspired by the composer's meeting with his compatriot, János Starker, who aided its composition. The work is comparatively austere but emotionally gripping. The first movement demands (and receives) passionate virtuosity; the darkly coloured central *Lento moto perpetuo* finale is dissonantly aggressive, with frenzied writing for soloist and orchestra alike, framing a hauntingly mysterious yet tranquil centre-piece. These are four first-rate works by a still neglected composer, marvellously played and recorded.

Ivan March

Saint-Saëns

Symphony No 3, 'Organ', Op 78^a.

Piano Concerto No 4, Op 44^b

^aJean-François Heisser *pf* ^bDaniel Roth *org*

Les Siècles / François-Xavier Roth

Les Siècles Live © ASMO4 (61 • DDD)

Recorded live at ^bOpéra-Comique, Paris, June 16,

2009; ^aSaint-Sulpice, Paris, May 16, 2010

Org Sym – selected comparisons:

Litaize, Chicago SO, Barenboim (4/87^b) (DG) 474 612-2/GOR

Marshall, Oslo PO, Jansons (4/95) (EMI) 555184-2

A rare in-situ recording of the Organ Symphony on period instruments



Saint-Saëns's *Organ Symphony* would be one of my desert island discs, and even here on the mainland it is a more or less permanent fixture on the car's CD system.

But it has to be either Mariss Jansons and the Oslo Philharmonic with Wayne Marshall on the organ of Rouen's Eglise de Saint-Ouen or Daniel Barenboim with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, teamed up with Gaston Litaize in Chartres Cathedral. These are my benchmarks in terms of interpretation, finesse and sheer excitement, against which this new one from the "period" orchestra Les Siècles, recorded with organist Daniel Roth in Paris's Saint-Sulpice, stands up pretty well.

The period instruments and sparse use of string vibrato do not diminish the amplex of sonority, and in the slow movement there is beguiling warmth. The whopping growl of the organ on its C major chord at the start of the *maestoso* section certainly makes its impact but some instrumental detail gets lost in Saint-Sulpice's acoustic and the bass drum's *fortissimo* thwacks sound like a 20-ton cannon. But there is visceral pleasure to be had from the performance's rhythmic drive, counterbalanced by polished phrasing and an appealing glow to the orchestral colour.

The Fourth Piano Concerto, recorded in Paris's Opéra-Comique, features Jean-François Heisser on an 1874 Erard in an affectionate, spry performance, the piano placed slightly too close, perhaps, but still allowing the strands of orchestral texture to shine through. **Geoffrey Norris**

Schmitt

La tragédie de Salomé, Op 50.

Le palais hanté, Op 49. Psaume XLVII, Op 38^a

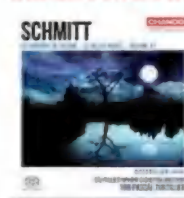
^aSusan Bullock *sop* São Paulo Symphony ^aChoir and Orchestra / Yan Pascal Tortelier
Chandos © CHSA5090 (68 • DDD/DSD • T/D)

La tragédie de Salomé – selected comparison:

Montreal Metropolitan Orch, Nézet-Séguin

(6/10) (ATMA) ACD2 2647

Nézet-Séguin has the edge in Salomé but this disc offers more music by Schmitt



Another month, another recording of Florent Schmitt's *La tragédie de Salomé*. Anybody who already has the recent ATMA release by Yannick Nézet-Séguin

and his Montreal-based Orchestre Métropolitain will have good reason to be satisfied with that and will probably not need to investigate further – unless the appetite for Schmitt is insatiable. Nézet-Séguin coupled *Salomé* with César Franck's D minor Symphony. Yan Pascal Tortelier and his Brazilian orchestra go all out for Schmitt, with the interesting inclusion in their programme of *Le palais hanté* and his setting of Psalm 47, giving the whole choir something to sing other than the female voices' wordless lines in *Salomé*.

The haunted castle that Schmitt had in mind was the one of Edgar Allan Poe's poem,

once "a fair and stately palace" adorned with "banners yellow, glorious, golden" but harbouring unspecified "evil things" that turn the idyll into something more macabre. It is this darker side that seemed to attract Schmitt for, although there are hints of pastoral tranquillity and princely gaiety, the creepy harmonies and images of foreboding suggest hidden threats. Tortelier relishes the rich Wagnerian colours and the fluidity of harmony and directs a radiant account of Psalm 47, with the chorus's singing fully matching the music's jubilation. If Nézet-Séguin brings more variety of atmosphere to *Salomé*, this one has strong dramatic impetus and the other two pieces definitely earn their place alongside it. **Geoffrey Norris**

Stravinsky · Poulenc

Poulenc *Les biches* **Stravinsky** *The Rite of Spring*
BBC National Chorus and Orchestra of Wales / Thierry Fischer

Signum © SIGCD205 (68' • DDD)

Recorded live at St David's Hall, Cardiff, June 19, 2009

Rite of Spring - selected comparison:

Gergiev, Kirov Orchestra (PHIL) (11/01) 458035 2

High-definition performances of two scores for the Ballets Russes



Thierry Fischer's French sensibility is evident from the very start of this brightly lit and articulate *Rite*: a provocative and teasing *rubato* in the opening bassoon solo immediately hints at the sexual and the chic. The verdant "dawn chorus" is crisp and transparent, sophistication clearly taking precedent over primitivism. The whole orchestra vibrates like a tuning fork, the rhythmic snap and incisiveness giving the reading terrific impulse and uplift. Fleet, airy, balletic – these are the watchwords.

The precision of the Welsh orchestra is impressive, the clarity and vitality of the sound throwing up detail that one thought had long since stopped being surprising. But here it is – freshly minted, vivid, and always with the footwork and bodily gyrations of the score as prime motivator. Yes, there are performances of rougher hue and bloodier thunder (Gergiev, for instance) but few invoking tales of the Ballets Russes in such high definition. The harmonic dissonance is always seductive in Fischer's hands – making the coupling of Poulenc's *Les biches* all the more appropriate and provocative.

Listening to the little wind chorales that punctuate the Poulenc, it's almost as if Stravinsky's primitive chants have been groomed for the salon. An altogether more titillating rite ensues. The complete score is afforded the luxury of the BBC National Chorus in the three numbers setting

17th-century texts. If they sound incongruous, they are – a kind of fashion accessory in a score that it was decreed should include singing. It was/is a kind of *Sylphides* for the 1920s, full of trendy allusions: the dapper Rondeau with its jazzy syncopations, the delicious insinuations of the *Adagietto*, and the Rag-Mazurka (with its naughty Chopin F sharp minor Polonaise quote) which is only a whisker away from a charleston. Fischer and his orchestra are again properly bracing and audacious, and the fact that both these performances were recorded live is further testament to the thorough preparation and high quality of the work. **Edward Seckerson**

Tchaikovsky

Symphony No 6, 'Pathétique', Op 74
Cologne Gürzenich Orchestra / Dmitri Kitaenko
Oehms Classics © OC666 (51' • DDD/DSD)

Tchaikovsky's heartfelt final symphony played with integrity and a cool head



Reconciling Tchaikovsky's innate "classicism" with his passionate Russian soul is really at the heart of interpreting this great work – so the combination of a German orchestra and Russian conductor might on paper seem like a plan. In practice, the German half of the equation predominates.

The Gürzenich-Orchester Köln is plainly a fine ensemble: poised, cultured, eminently articulate. The arrival of the first movement's second subject is well timed and tender, the tone not at all "overt", the phrasing very gracious. Beautiful clarinet-playing invokes a faded memory of it, a seamless switch to bass clarinet probing unfathomable darkness. But the seismic arrival of the development is at once too emphatic, too "controlled". As it spills over into that deep *sostenuto* in the strings, the sheer intensity of the sound is impressive with Kitaenko urging his first trumpet to twist the knife on the harmony. But still the feeling of a cool head prevails.

The middle section of the second-movement *Allegro con grazia* is quite controversial – markedly slower, even funereal, darker than I can ever remember hearing it. The marching *Scherzo* builds by stealth but never to the point of feeling truly inexorable. The finale's *Adagio lamentoso* doesn't grow out of its threat but rather feels too much like a separate event. For sure it conveys immense dignity right through to the fading pulse of the coda – the playing is indeed heartfelt and beautiful – but I suppose what I'm saying here is that for all Kitaenko's integrity one never gets enough of a sense of the deep fissures appearing in the work's classical façade. That and the fact that it just isn't Russian enough. **Edward Seckerson**

'The Greatest Romantic Violin Concertos'

Brahms Violin Concerto, Op 77 **Mendelssohn** Violin Concerto, Op 64 **Sibelius** Violin Concerto, Op 47 **Tchaikovsky** Violin Concerto, Op 35^d

Václav Hudeček *vn* ^{bc}Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra; ^{ad}Prague Symphony Orchestra /

^{ad}Jiří Belohlávek, ^bVáclav Smetáček

Supraphon © SU4055-2 (130' • AAD)

Recorded ^b1974, ^c1976, ^d1979, ^e1980

From Supraphon originals

Four great concertos from a violinist with an instinct to push the music



Václav Hudeček made quite a stir in the 1960s and became a protégé of David Oistrakh. These recordings reveal a violinist who can toss off the most difficult

passages with nonchalant ease, for instance in the last movement of the Sibelius. Hudeček doesn't like to linger unnecessarily and the first movement of the Mendelssohn is really *Allegro molto appassionato*, something we hear all too rarely. But this instinct to push through the music has its downside. The first-movement cadenzas in the Sibelius and the Tchaikovsky would benefit from more space to allow significant phrases to linger in the listener's mind.

In the Canzonetta of the Tchaikovsky, Hudeček's playing is vividly expressive, with a sense of freedom in following the fluctuating emotional moods. In other lyrical movements or sections, however – Mendelssohn's *Andante* or the Brahms *Adagio* – he conveys a more generalised expressiveness that doesn't illuminate the detailed workings of the music. Part of the problem here is that Hudeček has a comparatively narrow range of tone colour; another is his somewhat cavalier attitude to the composers' expression marks. Compared to Josef Suk's magnificent 1964 account of the Mendelssohn with Karel Ančerl and the Czech Philharmonic (Supraphon, 1/03), Hudeček is less exact in following every detail in the score, especially as regards playing quietly, and yet, with his comparative lack of expressive nuance, appears less spontaneous.

The recorded sound is variable but never quite ideal. The Mendelssohn comes over as rather strident; the Brahms is better balanced, with the orchestral detail particularly clear, but rather dry. I listened for comparison to Szeryng's live 1967 performance of the Brahms with Kubelík and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra (Orfeo), and was struck by the evocative richness of the sound, without which this concerto fails to make its full impact. So delight and admiration for Hudeček's dexterity is mixed with an overall feeling of disappointment. **Duncan Druce**

Chamber

Phantasm play Byrd • Gerhardt salutes Casals • Brahms sonatas from Steinbacher

Adams

Son of Chamber Symphony^a. String Quartet^b

^bSt Lawrence Quartet (Geoff Nuttall, Scott St John *vs* Lesley Robertson *va* Christopher Costanza *vc*) *International Contemporary Ensemble / John Adams

Nonesuch © 7559 79800-8 (54' • DDD)

Adams revisits his Chamber Symphony and comes up with a mischievous 'Son'



John Adams has often described his compositions as being either "trickster" or "serious". *Son of Chamber Symphony* appears to partake

of both characters but veers more towards the former than the latter. A remake of the composer's Chamber Symphony (1992), this rather headstrong, mischievous and unpredictable *Son* likes to do things his own way.

First and last movements are charged with rapid melodic figures, pulsing polymetres and rollercoaster rhythms, while the middle movement is for the most part withdrawn and introspective. Adams wears his musical influences on his sleeve here – ranging from Mahler and Stravinsky to jazz and swing – all of which makes for a gratifying, if occasionally bewildering experience. Such challenging music demands both poise and precision from the performers – which it receives in abundance on this recording by the International Contemporary Ensemble conducted by Adams himself.

If there's more than a hint of the "trickster" about the *Son*, then Adams's String Quartet is the equivalent of a serious, intense and rather overbearing father figure. Divided into two unequal movements, a weighty and densely packed first eventually gives way to an almost *scherzo*-like second. However, the mood is gradually dissipated by increasingly violent chordal outbursts, leaving the music on a dramatic knife-edge. A concluding coda section provides some relief but this is Adams at his most unforgiving and uncompromising. The St Lawrence String Quartet, for whom the work was written, provide a masterful performance; but the cheeky squeaks and raspberry noises of the *Son* are but a distant memory.

Pwyll ap Siôn

Beethoven

Three String Quartets, 'Rasumovsky', Op 59.

String Quintet, Op 29^a

Kuijken Quartet (Veronica Kuijken, Sigiswald Kuijken *vs* Sara Kuijken *va* Wieland Kuijken *vc*) with *Marleen Thiers *va*

Op 59 – selected comparisons:

Lindsays (4/87*) (RESO) RSB301

Alban Berg Qt (10/93*) (EMI) 573606-2

Takács Qt (7/02) (DECCA) 470 847-2DH2

Hungarian Qt (EMI) 767236-2

Op 59 No 1 – selected comparison:

Artemis Qt (VIRG) 545738-2

Challenge Classics ⑩ ② CC72362 (137' • DDD)

The Kuijken family offer probing interpretations of the Rasumovskys



Surprise No 1: this is not, as you might initially assume, a period-instrument reading of Beethoven's *Rasumovskys*. Surprise No 2: if you're familiar with the Kuijken Quartet of old, this is not it, for it's now an entirely family concern consisting of two generations of this musicianly family, with Sigiswald's wife, viola player Marleen Thiers, joining the throng for the Quintet. In a way, I was disappointed that this was a modern-instrument reading, for a set of *Rasumovskys* on early instruments by musicians as attuned and probing as these would have been truly noteworthy. It's still a curiously under-explored field on record.

In a crowded field, this new version stands its ground. Tempi tend to be swifter than some, and when it comes to capturing the intensity of creation of Beethoven's extraordinary triptych, the Kuijken Quartet are often compelling. In the *Adagio molto e mesto* of Op 59 No 1, for instance, they find an almost Shostakovichian bleakness to its opening and their sense of focus is unfailing. Admittedly, there are more rapt versions around, not least the beautifully poised Hungarian, the hypnotic Takács and the Alban Berg's first cycle, which avoids extremes but has a naturalness and an innate musicality which never fail to move. In the *scherzando* second movement, the Kuijken finds a lively humour that rivals The Lindsays and, particularly, the playful Artemis Quartet.

The slight rawness of sound (particularly that of leader Veronica) might bother some –

though it is no more pronounced than that of The Lindsays' Peter Cropper – but to my ears it often adds a piquancy to the interpretation, not least in the jarring rhythms that permeate the third movement of Op 59 No 2 and – at the other end of the emotional gamut – the amorphous slow introduction to Op 59 No 3. The Quintet is another impressive achievement and makes an enterprising finale to this set.

Harriet Smith

Beethoven • Mozart

Beethoven Violin Sonata No 1, Op 12 No 1

Mozart Violin Sonatas – No 28, K380; No 32, K454

Hélène Schmitt *vn* Rémy Cardinale *pf*

Alpha © ALPHA177 (67' • DDD)

Mozart – selected comparison:

Podger, Cooper (9/06) (CHNN) CCSSA23606

Period instruments, but a quest for regularity inhibits these readings



Exemplary clarity, but the insistent thrust in Mozart's fast movements is wearing. Rémy Cardinale and Hélène Schmitt exult in precision as a reflection

of their technical security; but there is little concern for flexibility. The notes from Cardinale's fortepiano (copy of an Anton Walter by Christoph Kern, 2006) in, for instance, the *Allegro* first movement of K380 cascade glibly, while Schmitt's partnership on a Nicolò Gagliano 1760 is of a matching calibre. There is no space for contrasts of expression within lines or paragraphs and repeats are largely unvaried.

Slow movements are less unyielding, yet a quest for regularity still inhibits a feeling for character and the *Andante* of K454 is no exception. Credible tempo notwithstanding, these artists have little time for resilient phrasing, lilting accentuation and subtle dynamic gradations. Schmitt's range is narrow and Cardinale doesn't use the expressive possibilities inherent in the damper and moderator knee-levers of his instrument.

Reach Beethoven's Op 12 No 1 and some considerate playing is evident in the Theme and Variations. *Rubato* and a heartfelt give-and-take to changes in the music are noticeable. Otherwise an edgy truculence pervades, superficially exciting to begin with but, as the clattering performance of the

finale shows, ultimately annoying. Regretfully, the fine art of duo playing is not yet a preserve of these players. It is of Gary Cooper and Rachel Podger, who also use period instruments and whose interpretations of Mozart's sonatas combine insight and sensibility to a remarkable degree.

Nalen Anthoni

Bingham

'Landscapes real and imagined'

Chapman's Pool. L'Usignolo. My Father's Arms. See and keep silent. Shades of Green. Shelley Dreams. The Cathedral of Trees. The Moon over Westminster Cathedral. The Mystery of Boranup. The Shadow Side of Joy Finzi.

Yersee Suh *sop* Chamber Domaine

Resonus Classics © RES10102 (91' • DDD)

A generous and varied showcase for this most communicative of composers



The second release from Adam Binks's enterprising, wholly digital Resonus Classics label comprises this absorbing anthology devoted to nine

chamber, vocal and instrumental pieces by Judith Bingham (b 1952). A pupil of Alan Bush and Hans Keller, and one-time member of the BBC Singers, Bingham possesses the enivable gift of writing music of uncompromising integrity, resourcefulness and questing spirit that both consistently ignites the imagination and engages directly with the listener. Take *Chapman's Pool* (1997) for piano trio: named after a cove on the Isle of Purbeck (but, to quote its creator, "as if sailed around, or flown over, as if in a dream"), it was conceived during her mother's final weeks and packs a wealth of sharply distinctive invention and piercingly personal expression into its four-movement, 18-minute span; indeed, my estimation for this remarkable essay grows with each hearing.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given her former career as a professional singer, Bingham also has a genuine flair for word setting. Of the three striking vocal compositions here, I'm particularly taken with *My Father's Arms* (2002) for soprano and string trio, a haunting and memorably compassionate treatment of three poems by Martin Shaw pondering the effects of war on children, be they innocent bystanders or actual combatants. Other stand-out offerings include *The Moon over Westminster Cathedral* (2003) and *See and keep silent* (2009) for solo piano and solo cello respectively, but prospective purchasers can rest assured that there are no duds in the entire programme.

Performances throughout are past praise in their stylish musicality and abundant dedication; the composer, who was present during the sessions, must have been delighted.

Both sound and balance, too, are outstandingly truthful (I downloaded the 24-bit lossless FLAC files for optimum quality). Copious, user-friendly presentation sets the seal on an exemplary issue.

Do investigate! **Andrew Achenbach**

Borodin

Piano Quintet^a. String Quartet No 2^b. Cello Sonata^c

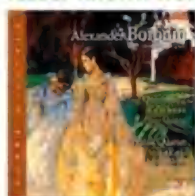
^a*Pražák Quartet* (Václav Remeš, Vlastimil Holec *vns* Josef Klusůň *va* Michal Kaňka *vc*) with

^c*Jaromír Klepáč pf*

Praga Digitalis © PRD/DSD250 282 (77' • DDD)

From PRD250 139, recorded 1999/2000

The evergreen Second Quartet and two lesser-known works, delightfully played



It's not by chance that only one of the works on this disc has a place in the permanent repertoire. Borodin's Second Quartet is as over-rich in memorable

ideas as the Piano Quintet is short of them (that the latter had to wait more than 50 years for a first public performance in 1915 and another 20 for publication is no scandal), while the Cello Sonata is a speculative completion by Mikhail Goldstein of a piece that was surely left as a torso because it was not turning out all that well.

Still, as a library acquisition, calculated to enrich one's perspectives on a wonderful composer and on the under-cultivated area of Russian chamber music in the nationalist camp, the value of the Pražák Quartet's enterprise is obvious. Their playing brings many delights of its own. The Second Quartet is idiomatically and individually coloured without ever sounding forced, and their pianist and cellist colleagues make contributions in no way inferior to the more limited competition in their respective works. The folksy springiness they bring to the (all-too-brief) *Scherzo* of the Quintet is a real highlight. Such affectionate and unpretentious music-making, in nicely balanced recordings, does Borodin an admirable service. **David Fanning**

Brahms

Violin Sonatas – No 1, Op 78; No 2, Op 100; No 3, Op 108. Scherzo, 'FAE Sonata', WoO2

Arabella Steinbacher *vn* *Robert Kulek* *pf*

Pentatone © PTC5186 367 (79' • DDD/DSD)

Performances that miss the unspoken subtlety of Brahms's three violin sonatas



This is a curate's egg of a disc. Least successful, in the first two movements at least, is the performance of the G major First Sonata, the contemplative and

intricately woven piece Brahms wrote at the end of the period which brought us the Violin Concerto and the Second Symphony. The sonata needs a more limpid line than Arabella Steinbacher provides and a clearer sense of the structure that underpins these inspired musings. This is also a louder and generally more pressurised performance than one is used to hearing. The finale is better, with a well-chosen tempo and a more sustained pulse. Some performances fall apart when the slow-movement theme returns midway through the movement, but not this one. Steinbacher also resists the temptation for G-string wallowing in the finale of the songful A major Second Sonata. This is by some distance the best served of the three sonatas. The second movement's winsome D minor *Vivace* may not sound very Slavonic but, then, not everyone thinks it is Slavonic.

Robert Kulek is not a celebrated Brahms pianist in his own right as some previous contenders have been: Serkin with Busch, Rubinstein with Szeryng, Katchen with Suk. At times he is more accompanist than fully fledged partner, though he is not helped by a recording which has the violin well forward and the piano slightly recessed. The D minor Third Sonata's elfin *scherzo* certainly needs a more sharply drawn sound than we have here, as well as a quicker tempo. Steinbacher plays up the sonata's gypsy melancholy but you need keener musical profiling if this late and endlessly subtle essay in Brahmsian *Sturm und Drang* is to make its mark.

The remaining piece is the fiercely characteristic Scherzo which the 20-year-old Brahms offered as his musical visiting card to the Schumann family circle in Düsseldorf in 1853. It is finely done. Uncomplicated Brahms is no problem for these players. It is the implied and unspoken elements in the music which sometimes eludes them.

Richard Osborne

Buxtehude

Trio Sonatas, Op 1 BuxWV252-58

Catherine Manson *vn* *Paolo Pandolfo* *va da gamba*

Mike Fentross *lute* *Ton Koopman* *org/hpd*

Challenge Classics © CC72252 (59' • DDD)

Easily enjoyable trio sonatas played with aplomb and abandon



Last year Ton Koopman and friends gave us an excellent first volume of Buxtehude's chamber music (1/11) containing his unpublished sonatas for various combinations

of strings; here, they follow up with the first of his two publications of 1696, both of which consisted of seven trio sonatas for violin, viola da gamba and continuo. If that has you expecting more uniformity and organisation this time, well that there is, though hardly the

Chamber reviews

kind of honed re-examinations of the same format that you would find in a set of sonatas by Corelli or Bach. Buxtehude's formal model is still the Italian *stylus phantasticus*, a free-flowing compilation of movement types – lyrical, slow-moving, virtuoso, contrapuntal, dancelike – where no two sonatas follow the same pattern. This is attractively married to a more solid, northern European sensibility and further distinguished from thousands of other trio sonatas by the gamba's equal melodic role with the violin.

The gamba part, indeed, sees one change of personnel from Vol 1, with Paolo Pandolfo joining the group, and he makes a typically keen-minded contribution that finds no difficulty in matching Catherine Manson's violin for tonal strength or definition. The pairing is heard at its best in the bubbling ostinato variations of Sonata No 4 or in the fugal *Allegro* of No 3 (fascinatingly reminiscent of the Sixth *Brandenburg*). In the booklet, Ton Koopman relates how the musicians improvised "abundantly and to their hearts' content"; certainly he is his usual effusive self on harpsichord and organ but I did wonder if such abandon led to the players taking their eyes off the ball in places, perhaps even contributing to what sounds like a wrong move in the bass at one point in No 4. That is a small matter, however, in the face once more of such generally expert and easily enjoyable chamber-playing as this.

Lindsay Kemp

Byrd

Fantasias a 3 – No 1; No 2; No 3; a 4 – No 1; No 3; a 5 (Canon 2 in 1); a 6 – No 1; No 2; No 3. In nomines a 4 – No 1; No 2; a 5 – No 2; No 3; No 4; No 5. Browning a 5 (The leaves be green). Te lucis a 4. Christe redemptor omnium a 4. Sermones Blando – a 3; a 4 No 2. Christe qui lux es a 4 – No 1; No 2; No 3. Miserere a 4. Pavans and Galliards – a 5; a 6. Prelude and Goodnight Ground a 5

Phantasm (Wendy Gillespie, Jonathan Manson, Markku Luolajan-Mikkola, Mikko Perkola, Emilia Benjamin *viols*) / **Laurence Dreyfus** *treble viol*

Linn (P) CD. CKD372 (79' • DDD/DSD)

Care and attention lavished on Byrd's exquisite instrumental consort music



Clever fellow, Byrd. Evidence of his legendary ability to survive as a Catholic and flourish at court in Elizabethan and Jacobean times seems not restricted to his sacred vocal music but pervades even his relatively little-known instrumental consort music. Only two of these works were printed during his lifetime (the *Fantasias* a 4 No 1 and a 6 No 3). The rest – an assortment of pieces with Latin titles

that Laurence Dreyfus calls "polyphonic enhancement of devotional hymns", *In nomines* that he aptly describes as "mystical consort rhapsodies", mercurial fantasias for three to six viols, some of which quote popular ballads, intricate variations on yet other tunes of the day, and pairs of pavans and galliards – have waited more than four centuries to receive the collective care and attention that this new recording by Phantasm affords them.

Building on the scholarly work of Oliver Neighbour, Laurence Dreyfus, founder-leader of Phantasm, has assembled 26 consort pieces by Byrd, preferring to contrast one with another rather than ordering them chronologically or by instrumental forces, while still providing listeners with the means to reorder them as they please. The presented order is undeniably a connoisseur's treat but possibly challenging for the uninitiated.

The playing is quite simply divine. Phantasm have long been known for their musical precision, to which they bring to this music a warm, woody, soft-edged articulation that suits it very well. The pacing of individual pieces and sections within them seems particularly sensitively judged and Byrd's textures sublimely balanced. Thanks, too, to Linn's engineers, we are able to experience with sparkling clarity Byrd's remarkable chamber music legacy.

Julie Anne Sadie

Chausson • Mathieu

Chausson Concert for Violin, Piano and String Quartet, Op 21^a **Mathieu** Piano Trio^b, Piano Quintet^c

^{ab}David Lefevre *vn* Alain Lefevre *pf*

^{ac}Alcan Quartet (Laura Andriani, Nathalie Camus

vns Luc Beauchemin *va* ^bDavid Ellis *vc*)

Analekta (P) AN2 9286 (78' • DDD)

A 'Canadian Mozart' with links to French music of earlier decades



André Mathieu (1929–68), dubbed a Canadian Mozart by his contemporaries, seems to have been completely untouched by any of the radical European trends of the mid-20th century but the fact that his Piano Trio of 1950 has points of contact with French music of several decades earlier does not of itself lessen its allure. Maybe just the opposite. It also provides a cue for coupling the Trio with Chausson's *Concert* of 1892 as well as with Mathieu's own Piano Quintet of 1953. With nods to Debussy in the Trio's slow first movement and perhaps to Honegger in the more angular contours and rhythms of the second, the music nevertheless establishes a sound world of its own, blending evocative Romantic dreaminess with a punchier angst. The same qualities

characterise the Quintet, a work which, like the Trio, is written with a refined ear for instrumental timbre and a secure sense of dramatic shape. Both works merit attention, the more so in performances, led by the pianist Alain Lefevre, that are so eloquently expressive, so sure in ensemble and so alert to the music's arresting fluxes of mood. There seems to be an underlying narrative to this music, which the performers convey with animation, tenderness and urgent passion. Mathieu's links with the French past are all the more apparent alongside Chausson's *Concert*, which Lefevre and his string partners play with discretion, fluency and palpable feeling for its heartfelt substance. A warmly recommended disc. **Geoffrey Norris**

Enescu

Piano Quartets – No 1, Op 16; No 2, Op 30

Schubert Ensemble (Simon Blendis *vn* Douglas

Paterson *va* Jane Salmon *vc* William Howard *pf*)

Chandos (P) CHAN10672 (67' • DDD)

French-influenced piano quartets by Romania's greatest musician



George Enescu inscribed the second of these pieces to the memory of Fauré. By that time (1944) his language had become infused with a Romanian

vernacular more profoundly than hitherto – the opening doesn't sound at all like Fauré, whereas the world of the earlier work, premiered in Paris in 1909, is clearly French, with Fauré's influence paramount and admiring glances in the direction of Ravel and Debussy's String Quartet. If you played either to an innocent ear they could be a puzzle because the readiness of invention and assurance of the writing proclaim exceptional gifts, on the one hand, while the personal characteristics are elusive, slipping away like soap in the bath. The booklet-notes include a memory of Enescu as an inspiring teacher at the Bryanston Summer Schools in the late 1940s but of a man so humble he seemed to take no account of himself whatsoever.

The world here is certainly not German. Tonality is not a directional force and the sonata principle, if in operation at all, hovers only distantly. And yet the movements – three in each piece – are often long, the first of No 1 nearly a quarter of an hour. There is a weave of voices that makes for a well-wrought continuity, and some variation of intensities, but the discourse is at once rather relentless – conversational it is not – and strangely nondescript. I long for more light and shade, and air, and for the tone of voice to change. The middle movements fall back into the same kind of continuum and add little to what has gone before, drifting to a close as the light fades. Another difficulty, as I perceive it,

especially in No 1, is Enescu's unsteady control of the role of the piano, which is not multifarious as in the Fauré piano quartets but veers uneasily between a backdrop and a strongly contrasted partner, upfront and out front. The First Quartet plays for 40 minutes. I will keep trying with No 2, where the impulses are fresher and more improvisatory in feeling, as they are in the Third Violin Sonata, a work I like very much.

I did wonder whether Romanian players might have brought more variety of sound to the folk-inflected elements of No 2 – and perhaps, individually and collectively, have been more willing to pick up the ball and run with it. I hesitate to be critical of the Schubert Ensemble, who are always so proficient and confident and well prepared. They have been well recorded and I'm not sure if anything more could be asked of them to bring the music off the page. I wish I could report having made more pleasurable discoveries.

Stephen Plaistow

Grieg

Violin Sonatas – No 1, Op 8;

No 2, Op 13; No 3, Op 45

Natasha Lomeiko *vn* Olga Sitkovetsky *pf*

Dynamic  DM8016 (61' • DDD)

From CDS278

Grieg

Violin Sonatas – No 1, Op 8; No 2, Op 13;

No 3, Op 45. Sigurd Jorsalfar, Op 22 – Gavotte

Alban Beikircher *vn* Senka Brankovich *pf*

Ars Produktion  ARS38496 (73' • DDD)

Vn Son – selected comparison:

H Shubert, Erez (9/06) (HYPER) CDA67504

Vn Son No 1 – selected comparison:

Frang, Lifits (5/11) (EMI) 947639-2

Vn Son No 3 – selected comparison:

Kreiser, Rachmaninov (6/02) (RCA) 09026 63907-2

Contrasting approaches to Grieg's violin sonatas – but there's stiff competition



I've long wondered why Grieg's violin sonatas aren't up there with those of Brahms in the affections of players. It wasn't so long ago that Vilde Frang and Michail Lifits reminded us of the genius of the youthful Grieg, with a compelling performance of the First Sonata. Now along come two recordings of all three works, with

markedly different approaches. On Dynamic, the two Russian artists' direct, overtly romantic interpretations are best suited to the Third Sonata – a glorious outpouring of Grieg's maturity, the folk aspect completely melded with his own style. But there are two aspects of this disc that bother me: the



A canon SURVEYED

Dutton's Dodgson overview

Dodgson

'String Quartets, Vol 3'

String Sextet^a. Flute Quintet^b. Clarinet

Quintet^c.


String Quartets^d – No 2; No 8; No 9

^bRobert Stallman *fl* John Bradbury *cl*

^cTippett Quartet (John Mills, Jeremy Isaac *vi*s

^{abd}Maxine Moore, ^{ac}Julia O'Riordan *vas* Bozidar

Vukotic *vc*) with ^eCaroline Dale *vc*

Dutton Epoch  2 CDLX7265 (123' • DDD)



With this release the Tippett Quartet completes its survey of "official" string quartets by Stephen Dodgson, whose nine (so far) works confirm

his prowess in the medium no less readily than do the piano sonatas or orchestral "Essays". Among the three featured here, the six-movement Second Quartet (1987) recalls Shostakovich's Ninth in its succession of short and contrasted genre pieces, given focus by the larger-scale finale that infuses previous ideas with a momentum that John Warrack aptly describes as "dancelike" in his booklet notes. The Eighth Quartet (2005) consists of three movements, with an

oblique sonata-piece followed by the deftest of intermezzos, before a nine-minute chaconne inhabits altogether tougher and more implacable territory. The Ninth Quartet (2006) might be thought more conventional in its demeanour: here an understated *Andante* precedes a truculent *Scherzo* and then an eloquent slow movement, before the *Alla marcia* finale emerges as a march-fantasy whose often quixotic progress leaves an (intentional?) sense of ambivalence towards the close.

A second disc further extends coverage of Dodgson's chamber output. The String Sextet (1996) also features a Chaconne, though this time a relatively urbane one to balance the robust Praeludium and ingenious "Scherzo and Shadow". The Flute Quintet (2003) is the lightest and most classical piece here, notwithstanding a central slow movement of affecting pathos, while the Clarinet Quintet (2007) purposefully intensifies as its four movements contract – ending with a finale of driving energy. Idiomatic performances and warmly immediate recording, making for a fine conclusion to this worthwhile series.

Richard Whitehouse

over-reverberant acoustic and violin-playing that sometimes comes across as a triumph of drama over subtlety, particularly in the *Allegretto quasi andantino* of the First Sonata and the opening movements of the Second and Third.

The German/Austrian duo on Ars tend to be more understated but there's sometimes a studied quality which can sound overly fussy. The opening movement of No 1, for instance, arguably benefits from a faster, more supple approach than is on offer here – precisely what Frang provides in abundance. And in the Second Sonata Hagai Shaham provides a more compelling option than either of the two new versions (though I'm less taken with his overly serious First Sonata) – particularly for the way he conveys the strangeness of the slow opening prior to its explosion of high spirits, and for the soaring beauty of tone in the slow movement. In the finale, with its stomping rhythm, Shaham treads a convincing middle-ground whereas the Ars version is too timid and the Dynamic duo lack subtlety.

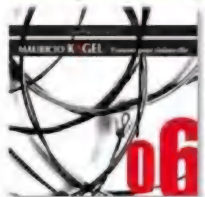
In the Third Sonata, there is tough if sonically elderly competition from the Kreisler/Rachmaninov version, which pitches the rhetoric of the first movement to perfection and is spellbinding in the second. But if it has to be modern-day performances, then Vilde Frang is the answer in No 1 and Shaham is pretty impressive in Nos 2 and 3. And let's hope Frang has plans to complete the set in the near future. **Harriet Smith**

Kagel

Match^a. General Bass^b. Siegfried^c. Unguis incarnatus est^d. For us: Happy birthday to you!^e. Magic Flutes^e. Motetten^e

^acd Christophe Roy, ^aRohan de Saram vs ^dSylvie Drouin pf ^aJean-Charles François perc
^bEnsemble Nomos / Michel Pozmanter
Hérissos © LH06 (69' • DDD)

New perspectives in cello music from the impish avant-gardist Mauricio Kagel



With its sensual, pear-shaped physique and knack of making even the most banal melodic utterance sound room-warming, the cello is a difficult instrument to find a reason to subvert. When Mauricio Kagel composed *Match* for two cellos and percussion in 1964, he worked from a chart he had prepared that catalogued every conceivable method of producing a sound from the cello. To be fair, he did the same for every instrument he wrote for during that time but, as the cello was Kagel's own instrument, the need for distance was greater.

Match is one of the unsung masterpieces of post war avant-garderie. Its premise might feel a tad whimsical – the “match” is between

two cellists who play a game of musical ping-pong, flinging material over the net, as the percussionist acts as an officious referee – but, typically for Kagel, this theatrical starting-point is only relevant for what it can render in sound. As Christophe Roy and Rohan de Saram plink-plonk sound backwards and forwards, their brutal ritual (more John McEnroe than Tim Henman) focuses the mind: supple nuances of attack become a big deal as the power struggle with an increasingly deranged referee keeps Kagel's sonic drama alive, unpredictable, impish.

Shorter works, including the sheets of sound of *Siegfried*^a and *Happy Birthday* reworked as Webernesque *Klangfarbenmelodie*, set the scene for *Motetten* for eight cellos, which again thinks the cello into a new future. Kagel reimagines the motet as a purely instrumental form, as voices within the ensemble fluctuate between single voices and complex polyphony. Like *Match*, compositional lateral thinking triggers new perspectives on old sounds. **Philip Clark**

Schubert

Piano Trio No 2, D929

Vienna Mozart Trio (Daniel Auner *vn* Diethard Auner *vc* Irina Auner *pf*)

Preisler © PR90793 (52' • DDD)

Selected comparisons:

Beaux Arts Trio (7/86^a) (PHIL) 475 7571POR2

La Gaia Scienza (12/97) (WINT) 910 006-2

Florestan Trio (11/02) (HYPER) CD467347

R & G Capuçon, Bräley (6/07) (VIRG) 365476-2

Schubert's great E flat Piano Trio in a performance that's a family affair



The very opening of Schubert's Second Trio is a good litmus test of what's in store. For the pianist it's a test of effect versus subtlety: it's very easy to acquire an

aggressive glint in those bare octaves, especially on a modern instrument. The Vienna Mozart Trio's pianist, Irina Auner, uses a Bösendorfer, which is slightly gentler in effect than some, the Beaux Arts (1984 vintage) included.

Another telling point is the tempo set for the second movement. Too generous and you can end up with a *Winterreise*-inflected tread, which only works in a reading of the utmost refinement. The Vienna Trio take an animated approach along the lines of the Florestan and the Capuçon/Bräley trios but that's where the similarity ends, for the latter find much more nuance and both are lighter on their feet in the accompanying figures, breathing vital air into the textures.

In the notes much is made of the ensemble's familial relationships in their bid for true “musical affinity” – husband Diethard and wife Irina being joined by their violinist

son Daniel – but I can't honestly say that special bond is audible on disc; ensemble is crisp and well-defined but no more so than from other experienced trios.

After the song-infused *Andante con moto*, Schubert offers us a more carefree third movement, the outer sections contrasting with the galumphing trio. This new version is not short of galumph but charm isn't really the Vienna's strong suit, and it's a touch po-faced compared to the ebullience of the period-instrument Gaia Scienza. Similarly, it's possible to find a more relaxed demeanour in the finale, and the dynamic range seems a little constricted. The Vienna perform this movement in its more extended original incarnation. If completeness is a priority, the Florestan disc helpfully offers both options, to be programmed at the flick of a switch. If it's not, the Capuçon/Bräley Trio is, among modern-day ensembles, hard to better.

Harriet Smith

Shostakovich · Weinberg

Shostakovich String Quartet No 10, Op 118

Weinberg Piano Quintet, Op 18^a

Kopelman Quartet (Mikhail Kopelman, Boris Kuschner *vns* Igor Sulyga *va* Mikhail Milman *vc*)

^aElizaveta Kopelman *pf*

Nimbus © NI5865 (66' • DDD)

A logical coupling let down somewhat by low-voltage, lethargic string-playing



Mikhail Kopelman was leader of the Borodin Quartet for 20 years, a period which included one of the better recorded cycles of Shostakovich's quartets,

and his Soviet-trained playing partners all have distinguished track records. So I am at a loss to explain the low voltage and general soggy of their latest Shostakovich recording. Is it a case of probing for greater intimacy and depth or of simply being over the hill? Just a few bars of Kopelman's 1978 recording as leader of the Borodin Quartet – any movement will do – are enough to remind you what real dramatic intensity sounds like (and that's not to mention the greatly superior earlier Borodin version reissued on Chandos, with Rostislav Dubinsky as first violin).

There is logic in the coupling, since Shostakovich's Tenth was dedicated to Weinberg, whose Piano Quintet is a fine achievement by no means over-shadowed by the comparison. Here, sadly, the same kind of lethargy affects the strings. Fortunately Kopelman's daughter Elizaveta is not too deferential to her elders, and when she gets the chance to drive the performance it sparks fitfully into life. Even her best efforts, though, are vitiated by a recorded balance that places the piano too far in the background. So, for

all the virtues of the piano-playing, this is not a performance to rate alongside other recorded versions, above all that of the composer with the Borodin Quartet (Dubinsky vintage), long overdue for reissue in the West.

David Fanning

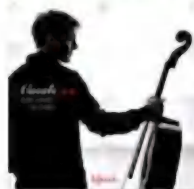
'Casals Encores'



Boccherini Sonata, G4 – Allegro moderato
Chopin Nocturne, Op 9 No 2. Prelude, 'Raindrop', Op 28 No 15 **Debussy** Menuet **Elgar** Salut d'amour, Op 12 **Falla** Nana **Fauré** Après un rêve, Op 7 No 1 **Godard** Berceuse de Jocelyn **Granados** Andaluza, Op 37 No 5 **Kreisler** Chanson Louis XIII and Pavane **Lassen** Mit deinen blauen Augen **MacDowell** Romanze, Op 35 **Popper** Chanson villageoise, Op 62 No 2. Mazurka, Op 11 No 3. Vito **Saint-Saëns** Allegro appassionato, Op 43. Carnaval des animaux – Le cygne **Sgambati** Serenata napoletana, Op 24 No 2 **Traditional** The Song of the Birds **Wagner** To the Evening Star

Alban Gerhardt vs **Cecile Licad** pf
 Hyperion © CDA67831 (73' • DDD)

Alban Gerhardt pays tribute to his cellist idol in a delicious selection of encores



In the last years of Pablo Casals's career his encores would almost invariably be drawn from Bach's Solo Cello Suites, works he had done more than anyone to

popularise. That suited his late image as an iconic figure. Yet, earlier in his career, his encores ranged far more widely, as is demonstrated in the 20 items in this delightful collection, beautifully played by Alban Gerhardt, until now represented on disc by far more demanding fare.

Casals's love of the music of David Popper, for example, represented here in three lively pieces, obviously fun for a cellist to play, demonstrates the cellist's lighter side. Popper was just a minor composer whose main merit was his understanding of the cello, here revealed in the naughty upward sweeps and similar tricks. Sgambati is another "fun" composer, similarly represented.

The great cello melodies beloved by everyone – the Berceuse from Godard's *Jocelyn*, Fauré's *Après un rêve*, Elgar's *Salut d'amour* (beautifully shaded) and, most important, of all "Le cygne" ("The Swan") by Saint-Saëns – all make an appearance here, inspiring Gerhardt to some of his most expressive playing, matched by the always sympathetic accompaniments from Cecile Licad. The disc ends typically on Casals's own arrangement of the traditional *Song of the Birds*, the more touching for being unaccompanied. First-rate sound, recorded at Wyastone Leys.

Edward Greenfield

Husband AND WIFE

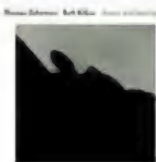
Zehetmair and Killius wedded by music



'Manto and Madrigals'

Killius Ó min flaskan friða **Scelsi** Manto
Holliger Drei Skizzen **Bartók** Duo **Skalkottas**
 Duo **PM Davies** Midhouse Air **Martinů** Three
 Madrigals **Nied** Zugabe

Thomas Zehetmair vs **Ruth Killius** vs
 ECM New Series © 476 3827 (49' • DDD)



If Mozart is the ancestor of most of the duets here, as Paul Griffiths observes in his booklet-notes, the genetic print lies not only in the complementary relationship between violin and viola explored in the *Sinfonia concertante*, K364 (and echoed in an ingenious palindrome by the young Bartók), but in the two marvellous Duets of 1783, where he takes pains to offset the apparent austerity of the instrumentation by hinting that there are more than two voices in discourse, or that they have more than one topic of discussion.

Skalkottas and Martinů do this with formidable bunches of multiple-stopping, the one in vigorous disputation, the other in playful and garrulous good humour.

Heinz Holliger and Giacinto Scelsi introduce the voices of the performers to twine with tingling sensitivity around their instruments. Microtonal fluttering will be like nails down a blackboard to some, no doubt, but I have to admit that I found the effect more like that of a good massage; Holliger especially knows just where to press and where to caress the points of tension. He wrote these "sketches" for this husband-and-wife partnership and celebrates that distinctive quality Zehetmair's playing has of dancing round the head of a volcano; so do Rainer Killius's Icelandic song to a bottle and a rebarbative sort of anti-encore by Johannes Nied, forming the bookends of this entirely original recital, which demands and repays more attention each time I return to it.

Peter Quantrill

Instrumental

David Russell excels in Albéniz • Goldbergs on two harpsichords • Liszt old and new

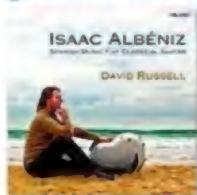
Albéniz

Cantos de España, Op 232 – Córdoba. España, Op 165 – No 1, Preludio; No 2, Tango; No 5, Capricho catalán; No 6, Zortzico. 12 Piezas características, Op 92 – Minuetto a Silvia; Zambra; Pavana; Torre Bermeja. Recuerdos de viaje, Op 71 – Rumores de la caleta: Malagueña. Suite española No 1, Op 47 – No 1, Granada; No 2, Cataluña; No 4, Cádiz; No 8, Cuba. Zambra Granadina.

David Russell *gtr*

Telarc © TEL3271202 (61' • DDD)

Perfect match: David Russell gets to the heart of Albéniz



In the past we've had to make do with only the occasional glimpse of David Russell's Albéniz on CD. Finally he has devoted an album to a composer whose piano music has always been popular with guitarists but whose subtlety and originality has eluded all but those approaching Russell's calibre.

Here the Grammy Award-winning artist virtually completes his journey through the Suite Española Op 47 – "Sevilla" and "Asturias" have already been recorded on *Reflections of Spain*, while "Aragón" and "Castilla" are rarely successful as solo guitar arrangements – as well as offering substantial chunks from the *Seis Hojas de Album* and *Doce Piezas Características* Op 92 and three further pieces from other collections.

As always, Russell's playing is a masterly blend of musical intelligence and poetic inspiration. In contrast to a more orchestral approach such as Julian Bream's, Russell references the piano in his sharply incised accompanimental figures and fulsome melodic lines – yet colours and textures akin to those found in Moorish architecture are the result.

This is more immediately obvious in the clean lines of "Córdoba", the detailed accompaniment of "Granada", the bright fluency of "Cuba" and the perfumed exoticism of "Zambra Granadina"; but it's equally in evidence in the dramatic "Torre Bermeja" and the delicate, nostalgic "Minuetto a Sylvia".

Given the complexity of some of the original scores, Russell is right not to muddy the waters too much. He is a master draughtsman, selecting the most expressive elements of his subject with a view to capturing its essence.

William Yeoman

JS Bach

Six Solo Cello Suites, BWV1007-12

Orphélie Gaillard *vc*

Aparte © 2 AP017 (140' • DDD)

Elegant and assured playing of Bach's early monument in the cello repertoire



The ink was barely dry on the review of Tanya Tomkins's recording (Avie, 6/11) when Ophélie Gaillard's set of Bach Suites appeared.

This latest recording will attract those wanting a more nuanced interpretation of these iconic works, the guiding inspiration of Tortelier seemingly evident throughout, especially in the preludes. Her playing is consistently elegant and assured, and – in contrast to Tomkins's – sounds quite modern. We are not so much transported back in time as brought up to date.

Gaillard produces a lovely tone from her 1737 Goffriller and in the Sixth Suite, a five-string Flemish violoncello piccolo. Technically assured, she is nevertheless physically challenged by these works, to judge from the many instances of audible breathing on the discs. Yet the focus and momentum she sustains in the Fifth and Sixth Suites in particular is undeniably impressive.

While sparing with ornamentation, like Tomkins, Gaillard takes considerable liberties with tempo and rhythm (is this really what the composer would have expected?). At issue are the courantes, which – with the exception of the fourth – are on the fast side (more corrente than courante), and less eloquent for it, even if the fifth one swaggers. Gaillard also takes a distinctly rhapsodic approach to the pulse of the allemandes and sarabandes, playing down their dancelike qualities in the supposed pursuit of greater expressiveness. More pervasive still is her reliance on rubato to draw attention to "important" notes, stretching them and even increasing their volume. The Fourth Suite, however, is a sparkling exception, beautifully articulated and paced, the Sarabande caressed and the first Bourrée playful.

That distinctive interpretations of these works continue to emerge is hardly surprising, given the depth and timelessness of the music, and it is entirely appropriate that collectors should, from time to time,

consider acquiring the latest recording in order to experience them anew.

Julie Anne Sadle

JS Bach

Goldberg Variations, BWV988

Stephen Devine *hpd*

Chandos © CHAN0780 (79' • DDD)

JS Bach

Goldberg Variations, BWV988

Alina Ratkowska *hpd*

Sarton © NO001-1 (77' • DDD)

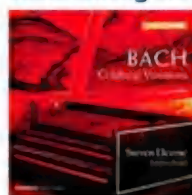
Selected comparisons:

Leonhardt (11/78) (WARN) 2564 69853-2

Hantai (4/94) (NAX) OP3084

Egarr (6/06) (HARM) HMU90 7425/6

Devine's harpsichord Goldbergs can stand among the best in a crowded field



In many cases, only a few seconds' difference distinguish the timings of the variations on these two sets of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* but a deeply inner sense of expansiveness in Steven Devine's interpretation makes his performance the more expressive and satisfying. Even when Devine's tempi are roughly the same as



those chosen by Polish harpsichordist Alina Ratkowska, Devine gives the impression of always having the room he needs to allow the music, its ornamentation and its sometimes devilish figuration to breath comfortably. Though not so stately and sedate as Gustav Leonhardt or as viscerally brilliant as Pierre Hantaï, Devine has the technique, the imagination and the mastery of period style to give a thoroughly satisfying performance.

By contrast, Ratkowska, performing on a brighter and glassier instrument, tends to push things forward, with steadier but also more manic tempi; the result is a recording that feels not quite fully realised, with details unfocused and some variations not quite digested. Her technique is solid but faster variations can feel crabbed and awkward. In her fast but not lithe playing of the delicate chasing lines of Var 17, one misses Devine's clarity, his acute use of small agogic details, his clear phrase shapes. In the *Adagio*, Var 25, Devine is more

nuanced, sculpting the melodic figures over an occasionally rolled or slightly staggered accompaniment, which helps thin and vary the texture. Ratkowska's reading of the *Adagio* is full minute faster than Devine's but feels more dragged out. And while Ratkowska musters a big sound in the *Ouverture*, Var 16, Devine's is grander, statelier and ultimately more Gallic in its pomp.

Illusionism is the key to the harpsichord and, while Devine's double-manual instrument is warmer across its various registration possibilities, he manages to create a more turbulent and brassy sound in the shaking chord figures of Var 29. Perhaps he pushes the rhythmic accentuation in the previous variation to the point that some listeners will find mannered. But again, it is in the interests of transparency.

This is crowded territory and only getting more crowded. Mere virtuosity, among harpsichordists, is no longer adequate. Devine's reading is worthy of consideration alongside other distinguished recent traversals, including that of Richard Egarr.

Philip Kennicott

Beethoven

'Piano Sonatas, Vol 2'

Piano Sonatas – No 4, Op 7; No 19, Op 49 No 1; No 20, Op 49 No 2; No 21, 'Waldstein', Op 53

Martin Roscoe pf

Deux-Elles © DXL1162 (69' • DDD)

Martin Roscoe continues his Beethoven sonata survey with refreshing results



These four sonatas are apt companions. Though bearing widely separated opus numbers, Op 7 and the two *sonates faciles* of Op 49 are contemporaneous

(1796-97) yet, in the published chronology of the canon, the latter precede Sonata No 21, the *Waldstein*. Thus three distinct Beethovens are on offer: the Sonatinas modelled on those of Clementi and Dussek, the adventurous E flat Sonata, Op 7 (the second longest of all Beethoven's sonatas) and the towering Op 53, written less than a decade later but light years away in its content and technical demands.

In welcoming the first volume of Martin Roscoe's projected cycle of all 35 [*sic*] Beethoven sonatas (6/10), I drew attention to playing that "only a refined pianist with the wisdom of experience could bring off quite as well". The same holds true for this second volume, the cover of which gives Beethoven top billing – a refreshing change and one which duly reflects the pianist's approach to these works.

There is a warmth, directness and humanity about Roscoe's Beethoven that is very appealing, no more so than in his beautiful handling of Op 7's *Largo* movement,

one of the highlights of the disc. The widely contrasted dynamics throughout the work, often changing on the turn of a sixpence mid-bar, are acutely observed but never exaggerated. This and Roscoe's careful phrasing ensure a seamless musical narrative. Listen to the coda of the first movement of the *Waldstein* for a further illustration – and to the sonata's treacherous final pages for a deft and joyous peroration. A fine disc, superbly recorded at Pottton Hall.

Jeremy Nicholas

Chopin • Scriabin

Chopin Etude, Op 25 No 9. Impromptu, Op 51.

Fantasia, Op 49. Nocturne, Op 27 No 2. Waltz,

Op 42. Polonaise-Fantasia, Op 61 **Scriabin**

Sonata-Fantasia No 2, Op 19. Etude, Op 42 No 5.

Impromptu, Op 12. Fantasia, Op 28. Nocturne for the left hand only, Op 9 No 2. Waltz Op 38.

Albert Tiu pf

Centaur © CRC 3093 (79' • DDD)

Scriabin – Selected comparison:

Pogorelich (DG) 429 391-2

Ashkenazy (01/90) (DECCA) 452 961-2

A canny combination exercise blessed with distinct musical pose and intricacy



This enterprising recital by Albert Tiu juxtaposes works by Chopin and Scriabin suggesting a mix of parallels and departures. Chopin's influence on early

Scriabin was paramount, but by the time Scriabin reached his Waltz in A flat Op 32 (always among his most enticing compositions) he had fragmented Chopin's already ornate arabesques into new kaleidoscopically shifting patterns and colours. Such observations dissolve in performances where heart and mind unite in a deeply affecting union. Tiu is the sort of artist – I use the word advisedly – who can make a single note or chord tell, yet always within an enviably natural, lucid and refined context. Others (notably Ashkenazy and Pogorelich) may generate a higher voltage in the storm-tossed finale of Scriabin's Sonata-Fantasia No 2 but even here Tiu maintains poise and intricacy of a special quality.

He is sensitive and musicianly without a hint of artifice in Chopin's Third Impromptu and wittily alive to the Op 42 Waltz's play of triple and duple rhythms. Throughout, nothing is pushed beyond its natural limit and in the miracle that is Chopin's Polonaise-Fantasia his subtlety and poetic commitment make you listen with new ears. This finely recorded recital comes with illuminating notes by both the pianist himself and Tou Liang Chang, and makes you look forward to further releases from a pianist who memorably evokes the sub-title of his programme, "Nocturnal Fantasies".

Bryce Morrison

Fauré

The Complete Barcarolles. Trois Romances sans paroles, Op 17.

Charles Owen pf

Avie © AV 2240 (63' • DDD)

Owen lets Fauré speak for himself on a subtle journey through the Barcarolles



If I was to find an apt description of Fauré's art – its craft and complexity – it would be Walter Pater's definition of Romanticism: "the addition of strangeness to beauty". The journey of the 13 Barcarolles from salon but always subtle beginnings through the darkness of Nos 7-10 to a final sense of reconciliation surely contradicts Fauré's sad, self-deprecating assertion that he seemed to repeat himself.

On the credit side, Owen is the least insistent or interventionist of pianists. He never invests the music with undue weight or significance. His performances glide gracefully, often in near strict tempo on their own momentum, quite without distortion or idiosyncrasy. But, if he could hardly be more lucid or refined, he could surely be less diffident and more giving. Time and again he leaves you to tease out Fauré's mystery for yourself. There is too little sense of the 7th Barcarolle's shifting crepuscular world, very much something of the night and, more generally, there is too little to seduce, entice or surprise.

The *Three Songs Without Words*, Fauré's response to Mendelssohn, are less of a challenge and Owen is at his urbane best in No 3. The recordings are excellent but the accompanying notes somewhat bald. You will find a very different ardour and commitment from Kathryn Stott (Hyperion, 5/95), but for the most inward and inclusive understanding of Fauré's enigma, turn to Germaine Thyssen-Valentin's recordings, available on Testament.

Bryce Morrison

Langgaard

'Piano Works, Vol 2'

Remembrances of Summer, BVN254. Summer Holidays in Blekinge, BVN123. In a Churchyard at Night, BVN22. Albumleaf, BVN3.

Adorazione, BVN223. Piano Piece, BVN426.

Music of the Depths, BVN169

Berit Johansen Tange pf

Dacapo © 6 220565 (63' • DDD/DSD)

Hints of Grieg, Schumann and Messiaen in the Danish composer's piano music



Imagine auditioning this disc with no clues about the composer Rued Langgaard and his nationality, or the works and when they were written, and then having

Instrumental reviews

to describe what you heard. You might ascribe the *Allegretto* from *Remembrances of Summer* to Grieg as rewritten by Schumann, yet Ravel's "Ondine" kicks in at 18", followed by a passage that smacks of Brahms's late Intermezzos. Certainly it doesn't sound like anything from 1940. By contrast, the 1921 *Music of the Depths* features slow, ceremonial, mystic Satie chords and birdsong evocations that predate Messiaen (they sound like Messiaen without sensuality or tone colour), followed by a section exploding with impassioned, Scriabin-esque repeated chords that soon arpeggiate like Busoni's polytonality on steroids. Should you want to hear Wagner's *Lohengrin* in the style of yet another Brahms Intermezzo, listen to the 1904 *Album Leaf*.

However, when you arrive at the large-scale 1934 *Adorazione*, the simple yet harmonically rich harp-like chords (later augmented by a chromatic counterline in octaves) clearly carry their own identity (OK, a tinge of Holst, but just a tinge!). The miniatures that encompass Langaard's *Summer Holidays in Blekinge* from 1916 are like Grieg's *Lyric Pieces* off kilter. For example, the final piece, "Aften med Dans", begins like an innocent salon waltz, yet the dynamic surges and petulant accents signify trouble up ahead in the form of restless modulations, only to calm down by way of a lyrical, chordal conclusion. Pianist Berit Johansen Tange has become a more confident and dynamically empowered Langaard interpreter since her 2005 release devoted to the composer's piano music, and seems more temperamentally attuned to the keyboard-writing's high quirk quotient and ear-catching inventiveness. The surround-sound option offers a fuller-bodied ambience in comparison with the conventional two-channel playback's relatively dry, close-up sound.

Jed Distler

Leighton

Et resurrexit, Op 49. Six Fantasies on Hymn Tunes, Op 72 – No 4, St Columba; No 5, Veni Emmanuel; No 6, Hanover. Missa de Gloria, 'Dublin Festival Mass', Op 82

Greg Morris *org*

Naxos © 8 572601 (70' • DDD)

Played on the Walker organ of Blackburn Cathedral
Enduring organ works in an intensely atmospheric recording



Kenneth Leighton's organ works definitely stand the test of time with their masterful contrapuntal textures, colourful chromatic but tonal harmony, and skilled organ-writing. One admires his clever use of a 12th-century plainchant in the *Missa de Gloria* – an organ Mass as fine as the ones

by Couperin and Messiaen. Curiously, the theme of *Et resurrexit* is virtually identical with the melody from the second section of Vaughan Williams's *Flos campi*, but again Leighton treats it in a variety of ingenious ways. It's fascinating to hear his individual approach to familiar melodies in three of the *Six Fantasies on Hymn Tunes* and it's a pity that Greg Morris did not record the other three – there was room on the CD.

Another possible cause for regret is the choice of Blackburn Cathedral as the recording venue. Certainly, the 1969 four-manual, 61-stop Walker organ has the appropriate neo-classical colours and a powerful *tutti* for this repertoire. However, the pipework is placed on four platforms either side of the chancel arch, so the organ's tones are projected in different directions. Combined with the cathedral's generous acoustic, the result is an occasional lack of clarity in Leighton's polyphony and Greg Morris's phrasing and articulation. This is a shame, as Morris gives very good performances and he's well served by the Naxos recording. If you can live with a sound that has intense atmosphere, sometimes at the expense of clarity, then this CD can be recommended to lovers of Leighton's marvellous organ music.

Christopher Nickol

Liszt

3 Liebesträume, S541 – No 3. Mephisto Waltz No 1, 'Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke', S514. Sonata, S178. Bach Prelude and Fugue, BWV543, S462. La lugubre gondola, S200

Khatia Buniatishvili *pf*

Sony Classical © 88697766042 (70' • DDD)

**A pianist bound to raise eyebrows
opts for a big-beast Lisztian debut**



What's with this goth-outfitted pianist sporting unruly hair, seated at a concert grand in the forest, with a swan to her right, resting on the ground? I can't imagine what Khatia Buniatishvili was thinking during her debut CD booklet cover photo shoot.

Actually, the question is what was the art director drinking? Let's not even talk about the pretentious symbolism run amok in the pianist's rambling, inchoate annotations.

Instead, let's zero in on her texturally and rhythmically vague A flat *Liebesträume* that opens this all-Liszt recital, where the tunes fall in and out of focus, in contrast to the shapely clarity distinguishing similarly introspective interpreters such as Leslie Howard and Jorge Bolet. Like many young virtuosos blessed (or cursed, as the case may be) with rapid-transit fingers, Buniatishvili tears through the Liszt Sonata's fear-inducing octaves and chordal climaxes with the

IN THE STUDIO

Rising star's Ravel

Chinese pianist Di Xiao is recording her first album for Somm. A frequent collaborator with the likes of cellist Julian Lloyd Webber and guitarist Xuefei Yang, Di is drawn to repertoire that covers a wide spectrum of musical styles. For the Somm recording, however, she is performing an all-Ravel programme: *Sonatine*, *Miroirs*, *Jeux d'eau* and *Le tombeau de Couperin*. The recording takes place on August 8 and 9 at Birmingham Town Hall. It is due for release in the first half of 2012.

Karabits 'bares' all

The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra has been back in the studio with its principal conductor Kirill Karabits to record another album for Onyx. From July 12 to 14, musicians gathered at Poole Lighthouse for a recording of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No 2 and two works by Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition* and the original version of *A Night on the Bare Mountain*. The release is planned for October this year.

Danes tape Nielsen

The Danish National Symphony Orchestra will be busy over August, recording the Nielsen and Tchaikovsky Violin Concertos with acclaimed Norwegian soloist Vilde Frang. The results will be released on EMI Classics in March 2012. Rumour has it that the orchestra will also be welcoming conductor Gianandrea Noseda for a recording of Shostakovich – repertoire to be confirmed – to be released on Chandos.

A Bergen Fairy Tale

Neeme Järvi and the Bergen Philharmonic will be at the Grieghallen, Bergen, from August 22 to 25, to record their fourth volume of music by Johan Halvorsen for Chandos. Repertoire this time includes the *Norwegian Rhapsodies* Nos 1 and 2, the *Passacaglia* for violin and viola and *Norwegian Fairy Tale Pictures* with an extra movement, "Dance of the Troll Maidens". The disc will be released in 2012.

EMI trumpet fanfare

As if we hadn't heard enough from Norway, the young Norwegian trumpeter Tine Thing Helseth – who previously recorded for the label Simax – is recording her first album for EMI Classics. She's joining the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra at the Friary, Liverpool, for "Storyteller", to be released in spring 2012. More EMI Classics news includes another young female trumpeter, Alison Balsom, who has just recorded the world-premiere of MacMillan's *Seraph* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. The disc will be out in January 2012.

adrenaline and subtlety of a pit bull, but her antsy rhythmic sense, dynamic miscalculations and general lack of long-range planning wear thin after several hearings.

The First *Mephisto* Waltz's faster-than-humanly-possible leaps and sweeping arpeggios must be travelling faster than the speed of sound, because you can barely ascertain the pitches (at least those that are not overpedalled). While Buniatishvili does convey a convincingly bleak and stern profile in *La Lugubre Gondola* No 2, I prefer the longer-lined animation and extended palette of tone colour that pianists as different as Michael Korstick and Arcadi Volodos serve up.

However, Buniatishvili is at her best in the Bach A minor BWV543 Prelude and Fugue transcription, where her playing becomes far more poised and controlled, without sacrificing one iota of imagination. The latter selection alone is worth the price of admission.

Jed Distler

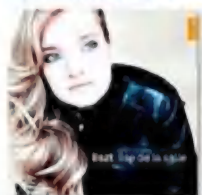
Liszt

Après une lecture du Dante, S161 No 7. Lacrymosa (Mozart), S50 No 2. Ballade No 2, S171. Liebeslied (Schumann), S566. Mazeppa, S139 No 4. Nuages gris, S199. Strändchen (Schubert), S560. Funérailles, S173 No 7. Isoldes Liebestod (Wagner), S447

Lise de la Salle *pf*

Naïve © V5267 (77 • DDD)

A crowning achievement as Lise de la Salle turns from Chopin to Liszt



After her controversial previous disc, a brave if sometimes misguided attempt to invest Chopin with a renewed sense of drama and significance, the

wonderfully gifted 23-year-old Lise de la Salle gives us a Liszt recital of astonishing strength, poetry and, for one so young, musical maturity. Whether in fist-shaking defiance, radiance or baleful resignation, she is superbly responsive to Liszt's rhetoric in the *Dante* Sonata. Here, as elsewhere, everything is given time to "speak, to weep and sing and sigh" (part of Liszt's own definition of a true virtuoso). She has all the pace and technique for the ferociously demanding "Mazeppa" Etude yet there is never a hint of extraneous display.

In the Second Ballade she commences its epic story (for Sacheverell Sitwell, less concerned with personal suffering than with "great happenings on the epic scale") with a wholly individual conjuring of menace, like so much distant thunder, and the final pages have a superb opulence before a coda of a sustained visionary beauty. She captures all the sombre magnificence of "Funérailles" and ends with a memorably full-blooded account of the Wagner-Liszt *Isoldes Liebestod*. She is as

poised and refined in miniatures as she is in her large-scale offerings and, wherever you listen, you will hear Liszt-playing of a special distinction. Lise de la Salle has been finely recorded and this, her seventh disc for Naïve, is a crowning achievement.

Bryce Morrison

Liszt

Piano Concerto No 1, S124^a. Piano Sonata, S178^b. Valse oubliée, S215 No 1 (two recordings^{c/d}). Funérailles, S173 No 7^e. Valse impromptu, S213^e. Mephisto Waltz No 1, 'Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke'^f. Liebestraum, S541 No 3^d. Hungarian Rhapsodies, S244^e – No 10; No 12. Consolation, S172 No 3^g

Arthur Rubinstein *pf* RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra / Alfred Wallenstein

RCA Red Seal © ② 88697 84019-2 (103' • ADD)

Recorded ^d1950, ^e1953, ^f1955, ^g1956, ^h1957, ⁱ1961, ^j1965

Rubinstein was as fine in Liszt as in Chopin, as this collection demonstrates



Liszt is not a composer one instantly associates with Rubinstein (Harvey Sachs in his quite excellent biography devotes but a single sentence to Liszt in the

37-page survey of the pianist's recordings). This blistering account of the E flat Concerto, recorded in Carnegie Hall when Rubinstein was in his late sixties, might change that perception.

Rubinstein considered Wallenstein, after Barbirolli, the finest orchestral accompanist (praise indeed) and you can hear the benefit of such a partnership: the playing crackles with the drama and energy of a live performance. True, the soundscape is very much of its time (think black-and-white B-movie soundtrack), with the woodwind soloists artificially lit to reflect the forward placing of the soloist and a triangle player who must have been recruited from the New York Fire Department. Somehow it all works – and sends a shiver of delight up the spine.

The solo items, too, generally rise above the often constrained nature of Rubinstein's studio recordings, though the consistently dry acoustics stifle the full sonority of a concert grand. In the Sonata he eschews the demonic brilliance of Horowitz for dignity and splendour, its emotional climax (truly affecting) coming in the middle of the "slow movement"; "Funérailles", taken quite fast, is vehement in its despair; the E major *Hungarian Rhapsody*'s sequence of *glissandi*, sounding cheap in some hands, is here stylish and witty. And if there are any lingering doubts about Rubinstein's Lisztian credentials, the final *tour de force*, the Hungarian Rhapsody No 12, will surely banish them.

Jeremy Nicholas



**MORITZBURG
FESTIVAL**

**MORITZBURG FESTIVAL
7–21 AUGUST 2011**

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR:
JAN VOGLER

COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE:
TORSTEN RASCH

ARTISTS:
e.g. FRANK PETER ZIMMERMANN, ANTOINE TAMESTIT, JAN VOGLER, ALICE SARA OTT, BENJAMIN SCHMID, ANDREAS HAEFLIGER, COLIN JACOBSEN, NILS MÖNKEMEYER, NICOLA BENEDETTI, CHRISTIAN POLTÉRA, MIRA WANG, MARINA PICCININI, KRISTOF BARATI, DANJULO ISHIZAKA, PHILIPPE QUINT, RUTH ZIESAK, JULIAN STECKEL, ANTTI SIIRALA, VALERIY SOKOLOV, DAVID ORLOWSKY

TICKETS & INFORMATION:
TEL.: +49 (0)351 810 54 95
FAX: +49 (0)351 810 54 96
E-MAIL: BUERO@MORITZBURGFESTIVAL.DE

WWW.MORITZBURGFESTIVAL.DE

WE ARE PROUD OF
OUR OFFICIAL PARTNER:



Vocal

Haydn's Seasons from the LSO • Howells in Winchester • Britten song-cycle begins

Britten

'Songs, Vol 1'

To lie flat on the back. Night covers up the rigid land. A Dirge. Virtue in deeds not words. Prithee. Lucy. Canticle No 1, 'My beloved is mine'. Um Mitternacht. Six Hölderlin Fragments, Op 61. The Holy Sonnets of John Donne, Op 35. Cabaret Songs. Tit for Tat. Beware!. Lilian. The Joy of Grief. The Poet's Echo, Op 76. Winter Words, Op 52

Katherine Broderick *sop* Caryl Hughes *mez*

James Geer, Ben Johnson, Nicky Spence,

Andrew Tortise, Robin Tritschler *ten*s

Philip Smith *bar* Malcolm Martineau *pf*

Onyx © 2 ONYX4071 (131' • DDD • T/D)

An opportunity to build a rounded portrait of Britten through his songs



A complete survey of Britten's songs is like taking an aerial view of the composer's entire creative life. Under the aegis of Aldeburgh

Music, this new series of the complete songs with piano comes with the extra advantage of having access to the many youthful works archived in the Britten-Pears Library, with the result that it is able to extend our knowledge even further back into the composer's early years. Vol 1 includes five premiere recordings, none of them essential listening, perhaps, but each adding a touch more depth to the portrait. The best are "Prithee" from 1926, which pursues a new take on the English ballad style, and "A Dirge" from the same year, where the 13-year-old composer lights upon some imaginative harmonies.

Another attraction here is the opportunity to sample some of Britain's best young singers. Andrew Tortise, David in WNO's recent *Die Meistersinger*, uses his light voice to pinpoint verbal details in a poetic account of the First Canticle and James Geer turns a nicely expressive line in the infrequently performed *Sechs Hölderlin-Fragmente*. Among so many potential successors to Peter Pears, though, two tenors stand out: Robin Tritschler, who gives a performance of exceptional tenderness in the ever-popular *Winter Words*, and Ben Johnson, whose strong and intense singing of the *Holy Sonnets of John Donne* nails his colours to the Britten mast with impressive authority. Overall, few

apologies need to be made for the youth of the performers, though mezzo Caryl Hughes finds the *Cabaret Songs* tricky to bring off, as others have before her, and Katherine Broderick's soprano has a Vishnevskaya-like sharp edge in *The Poet's Echo* that works less well on disc than it did in the recitals from which this series emanates. As always, Malcolm Martineau's accompaniments are a constant source of inspiration on the journey – one more reason why this series promises to be a major addition to the Britten discography. Full texts and translations, where necessary, are included, albeit in very small print.

Richard Fairman

Eccard

Übers Gebirg Maria geht. Zu dieser österlichen Zeit. Missa 'Mon coeur se recommande à vous'. Zacharias war ganz verstummt. Freut euch, ihr lieben Christen. Vom Himmel hoch. Maria wallt zum Heiligtum. O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig. Der heilig Geist vom Himmel kam. Sei fröhlich allezeit. Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist. Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ. Herr Jesu, Gnadensonne. Mein schönste Zier. Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich. Vater unser im Himmelreich North German Chamber Choir /

Maria Jürgensen

MDG © MDG902 1694-6 (57' • DDD • T/D)

Eccard's choral music reveals him as an important forerunner of Bach



An all-Eccard CD is long overdue since his music is woefully under-represented in the catalogue. This recording (released to mark the 400th anniversary of his death in Königsberg in 1611) re-establishes him as one of the most important 16th-century Lutheran composers. Brahms (who championed Eccard's music with his choirs in Hamburg and Vienna) placed him on a par with Gabrieli and Schütz. Anglophone singers are mostly familiar with one of Eccard's motets, the paraphrase from the Song of Simeon, *When to the temple Mary went*.

The Mass *Mon coeur se recommande à vous* is a comparatively early work, dating from 1579, and was composed at the outset of the eight-year period Eccard spent in the service of Jakob Fugger, one of the Augsburg mercantile

dynasty. This is Eccard's only surviving Mass setting and is a parody work, based on Lassus's chanson. The 15 shorter pieces range quite widely in texture, mood, length and key from the intimate simplicity of *Nun bitten wir* to the richness of the six-part *Der heilig Geist*, through the charm of the miniature *Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich* to the solidity of the concluding *Vater unser im Himmelreich*.

The Benedictine Monastery of Cismar in Schleswig-Holstein provides this 16-strong choir with a fresh and bright (though also warm) acoustic. Their blended tone is beautifully balanced and caught to perfection by the Dabringhaus und Grimm production team. Maria Jürgensen keeps everything moving along. Despite lasting just under an hour, this delightful disc really is a gem.

Malcolm Riley

Grandi

Vespro della Beata Vergine

(assembled by Rudolf Ewerhart)

Deborah York *sop* Daniel Taylor *counterten*

Ed Lyon *ten* Peter Harvey *bass* Bach-Collegium

Stuttgart / Matthew Halls

Carus © CARUS83 367 (58' • DDD • T/D)

Recorded live at the Markuskirche, Stuttgart,

September 12, 2010

Alternative Vespers psalms and motets in a flawless live recording



It is natural that musicians seeking a viable close alternative to Monteverdi's published *Vespers* of 1610 should consider appropriate selections

by Alessandro Grandi (c1586-1630), a fine composer whose early career was divided between Ferrara (probably his native town) and Venice. In 1620 he became Monteverdi's deputy at St Mark's in Venice; only three years before his death he became *maestro di cappella* at S Maria Maggiore in Bergamo. The Vespers-related works performed in this flawless live recording were selected from anthologies of music Grandi wrote for different kinds of forces and occasions in various cities across a period of at least 20 years. The pieces amply demonstrate Grandi's masterful command of a variety of sacred styles; admirers of early-17th-century Italian sacred music will find plenty to sink their teeth into. It was a fascinating idea for

Bach-Collegium Stuttgart to tackle this earlier style under the guest direction of Matthew Halls. The immediately striking characteristic of the larger-scale choral passages is a musky yet opulent sound; the balance of big choir and few instruments looks odd on paper but in the bigger-scale psalms the choral textures are pleasingly lean, virtuoso soloist passages are executed superbly and Bach-Collegium's instrumentalists play with a nice juxtaposition of conversational grandeur. I particularly relished the contoured contrasts and compelling surprises in a magnificent setting of "Nisi Dominus". There are also several intimate solo motets, such as the famous "O quam tu pulchra es", sung imploringly by Ed Lyon, and a piercingly lovely performance of "Vulnerasti cor meum" by Deborah York.

David Vickers

Hasse

Requiem in C. Miserere in C minor
Johanna Winkel, Marie Luise Werneburg *sops*
Wiebke Lehmkuhl, Marlen Herzog *contrs* Colin
Balzer *ten* Cornelius Uhle *bass* Dresden Chamber
Choir; Dresden Baroque Orchestra /
Hans-Christoph Rademann
Carus © CARUS83 349 (70' • DDD • T/I)
Recorded live at the Marienkirche, Marienberg,
September 4-6, 2010

Memorial works from a rich period in the musical history of Saxony



In 1733 the new elector of Saxony, Friedrich August II, appointed Hasse his new Kapellmeister but allowed the famous opera composer plenty of time off from Dresden to pursue his lucrative freelance career. Thirty years later Hasse composed a Requiem in C major for the elector's state funeral, which now receives first-class attention from Hans-Christoph Rademann and his excellent Dresden forces (they have already recorded a superb version of Hasse's E flat Requiem, composed only a few months later for Frederick Augustus's short-lived successor Friedrich Christian).

Like a previous recording of the C major setting by Paul Dombrecht and Il Fondamento (Naïve, 11/93^R), Rademann's excellent performance perfectly captures Hasse's attractive juxtaposition of solemn grandeur and graceful beauty. It is easy to appreciate why Hasse's Requiem in C major was revived in Dresden on every anniversary of its dedicatee's death until 1850: the Dresden Baroque Orchestra relish the instrumental sonorities typical of Dresden court chapel music during the Augustan age, such as ceremonial trumpets in "Tuba mirum", pastoral flutes in "Recordare" and virtuoso oboes in "Inter oves". The Dresden

Chamber Choir sings with an ideally rich balance between parts, impeccable tuning and satisfying phrasing of lines. The soloists shine in passages that typify the 64-year-old Hasse's mastery of early "classical" style. The disc concludes with a masterful performance of a tender, more "Baroque" *Miserere*, originally composed in about 1731 for the female voices of Venice's Ospedale degli Incurabili but revised by Hasse for the SATB forces of the Dresden Hofkirche. Outstanding stuff.

David Vickers

Haydn

Die Jahreszeiten
Miah Persson *sop* Jeremy Ovenden *ten*
Andrew Foster-Williams *bass* London Symphony
Chorus and Orchestra / Sir Colin Davis
LSO Live © LSO0708 (128' • DDD • T/I)
Recorded live at the Barbican, London, June 27, 2010

Selected comparison:

Darcis (4/69^R) (PHIL.) 464 034-2PM2

Sir Colin returns to The Seasons four decades on, with a change of language



On disc, at least, Haydn's life-affirming celebration of an idealised rural world now rivals *The Creation* in popularity. Amid desirable period-instrument versions from Gardiner (Archiv, 5/92), Jacobs (Harmonia Mundi, A/04) and Harmoncourt (DHM, 10/09), Colin Davis's 1968 recording, in English, has always held its own for its freshness and exuberant delight in Haydn's Arcadian vision. Four decades later, with a change of language, Davis has rethought one or two tempi, usually upwards: the "Freudenlied" in Spring now trips more blithely; and the Bacchic revels in Autumn are even more lustily uninhibited. With the LSO on prime form (even if the trumpets can let rip too enthusiastically), he is as responsive as ever both to the zest and humour of this most joyous of oratorios, and to the symphonic/contrapuntal grandeur of movements like the final chorus of Spring. Fugues always unfold with cumulative power. Occasionally Davis's tempo choice goes against current orthodoxy, as in the trio and chorus in praise of hard work. Yet his spacious conception lends this oft-maligned (not least by Haydn himself) number a nobility unsuspected from the spruce, up-tempo performances one usually hears.

While the 100-strong LSO chorus don't quite match the tonal firmness of the best professional choirs, they sing with spirit, crisp diction and plenty of punch at climaxes – impressive agility, too, in the riot of fugal laughter that greets the summer sunrise. All three soloists are well chosen. Miah Persson, though occasionally prone to flatness in descending passages, is smilingly elegant in

her coloratura aria in Summer and witty without archness in her winter's tale of aristocratic lust outsmarted, where the choral chuckles sound truly mirthful rather than forced.

Jeremy Ovenden, slightly stretched *in alt* in his aria about the lost traveller, is especially good in Haydn's marvellous evocations of the summer dawn and the midday heat, abetted by hushed, veiled LSO strings. Andrew Foster-Williams, a fine classical stylist, is breezily extrovert in the ploughman's song and the bird-shoot (though the burbling bassoon obbligato is insufficiently audible here), and brings a grave intensity of line to his memento mori in Winter. As ever, the Barbican acoustic lacks an ideal bloom and wind detail can get lost, though the choral-orchestral balance is well judged. While Davis's 1968 recording is by no means eclipsed, this exhilarating and affectionate LSO performance can be recommended to anyone wanting *The Seasons* in German, performed with modern instruments on the grand scale we know Haydn relished.

Richard Wigmore

Howells

Jubilate Deo (for the Chapel Royal). Thee will I love. Evening Service, 'Winchester Service'. Rhapsody No 4. Come, my soul. Te Deum (for St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol). Coventry Antiphon. A Flourish for a bidding. Antiphon. The fear of the Lord. Exultate Deo
Winchester Cathedral Choir / Andrew Lumsden
with Simon Bell *org*

Hyperion © CDA67853 (69' • DDD • T/I)

The beautiful and adventurous choral music of Herbert Howells



This is one of the most beautiful CDs of choral music you're likely to hear. For listeners, it's also one of the most demanding, due to the extreme complexity of the harmonic writing and the ultra-busy choral and organ textures. Lovers of Howells's music will recognise his familiar compositional trademarks, but in the last 20 years of his life he became more adventurous with his ever-changing time signatures and colourful chord progressions – quite often it's difficult to tell which key one is listening to. However, repeated hearings will gradually unravel the music's many delights and there's a pleasing variety in Howells's choice of texts from the Bible (Old and New Testaments), plus poems by Robert Bridges, George Herbert and John Newton.

If the music is challenging to listeners, it presents choirs with a Herculean task. Fortunately, the magnificent Winchester Cathedral Choir gives performances of near-perfection that sound completely

outhere



RICERCAR - RIC 313

GIOVANNI GIORGI

Missa à due cori tutti piena / Motetti

CHCEUR DE CHAMBRE DE NAMUR

CAPPELLA MEDITERRANEA

CLÉMATIS

LEONARDO GARCÍA-ALARCÓN

*The discovery of Giovanni Giorgi's music changed
Leonardo García-Alarcón's life forever.*

It could change yours!

Previous releases :

GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI
Il Regni d'Amore

MARIANA FLORIN
CLÉMATIS

LEONARDO
GARCÍA-ALARCÓN



RIC 300



RIC 308

MATHEO ROMERO
Romerico Barroco

CLÉMATIS
CAPPELLA MEDITERRANEA

LEONARDO
GARCÍA-ALARCÓN

www.outhere-music.com

Distribution UK

RSK
Entertainment

allegro
CLASSICAL

Distribution US

Retrospect Trio Purcell: Twelve Sonatas in Three Parts



Featuring: Sophie Gent violin, Matthew Truscott violin, Jonathan Mason bass viol and
Matthew Halls harpsichord/organ

Following the success of their critically acclaimed recording,
Purcell: Ten Sonatas in Four Parts, Retrospect Trio presents
their highly anticipated follow-up album.

Available September 2011

*'Retrospect's Purcell makes a release of the three-part sonatas
a mouthwatering matter of urgency.'* **BBC Music Magazine**



LINN CDJ 532

**Henry Purcell
Ten Sonatas in Four Parts**

'Stylish accounts of this great Baroque chamber music...'
The Sunday Times Top 100 Albums of 2009

Editor's Choice: *'ripe emotional tension...
impeccable technique'* **Gramophone**

Record of the Year Finalist
2009 Classic FM Gramophone Awards



RSK
Entertainment

UK Distribution RSK Entertainment
www.rskentertainment.co.uk

Distributed in the USA by
Naxos of America
www.naxos.com

All albums available in
Studio Master from
www.linnrecords.com

Also available from
amazon.com



LINN

effortless. One notices the subtle variety of phrasing, ranging from seamless *legato* to punchy accents in irregular rhythms. There's an ideal blend and balance between upper and lower voices, and the trebles have a warm, glowing brightness reminiscent of the choir of King's College, Cambridge, in the 1960s. Andrew Lumsden chooses just the right tempi throughout the CD and Simon Bell provides impeccable accompaniments with intimate colouring. He also displays tremendous virtuosity in the two organ solos, although the smooth, distant sound of the cathedral's Willis organ doesn't quite do him or Howells justice. A fine recording and an excellent booklet help to make this a CD to treasure.

Christopher Nickol

MacMillan

Jubilate Deo. Serenity. Magnificat and Nunc dimittis. Tremunt videntes angeli. On Love. ...here in hiding.... Give me justice. The Lamb has come for us from the House of David. Le tombeau de Georges Rouault Wells Cathedral Choir / Matthew Owens with Jonathan Vaughn org

Hyperion © CDA67867 (79' • DDD • T/D)

Sacred choral works spanning James MacMillan's prolific career



The Choir of Wells Cathedral lives up to its reputation as Britain's best cathedral choir (see *Gramophone*, 1/11) in this 30-year survey of James MacMillan's smaller-scale sacred music. As *The Lamb has come for us from the House of David* (1979) shows, even as a 20-year-old student he had an assurance and a forthrightness fitting for what MacMillan himself calls an "apologist for Catholicism" and the Wells sound, recorded with appropriate spaciousness but without excessive resonance, easily rises above occasional suggestions of Anglican gentility.

The two most recent pieces, *Jubilate Deo* and *Serenity* (both 2009) demonstrate MacMillan's skilful blending of those aspects of modern mainstream musical styles – more of Messiaen or Britten than of Ligeti or Maxwell Davies – which underpin the unapologetic accessibility of his choral writing. But the extended motet ...*here in hiding...*, written for the solo quartet of the Hilliard Ensemble, has an extra vividness and a touch of raw primitiveness that seems so much more compelling in a religious context than the triumphalist tone breaking through here and there, as in the brazen *Gloria* of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* – though (fortunately) brazenness is starkly opposed in the end by hushed reticence.

The only possible miscalculation is using a brave solo treble for the 1984 setting of Khalil Gibran's *On Love*, where more operatic tones,

whether male or female, would surely be preferable. But all credit to choir director Matthew Owens and organist Jonathan Vaughn, the latter proving in a well-calculated reading of *Le tombeau de Georges Rouault* that MacMillan in questing mode is far superior to MacMillan the barnstormer.

Arnold Whittall

Mendelssohn

Elijah, Op 70 (sung in German)

Andrea Rost, Barbara Fleckenstein, Letizia Scherrer *sopr* Marjana Lipovšek *mez* Herbert Lippert, Thomas Cooley *ten* Michael Volle *bass* Bavarian Radio Symphony Chorus and Orchestra / Wolfgang Sawallisch

Profile © 2 PH07019 (121' • DDD • T)

Recorded 2001

Elijah, returned to its composer's native German, offers a different perspective



I imagine that, for most *Gramophone* readers, *Elijah* should be sung in English, as at the first performance in Birmingham on August 26, 1846. Clearly descended from *Messiah*, with its rousing choruses and its echo of "For he is like a refiner's fire", it became, with *St Paul*, a model for composers of oratorio for the rest of the century: Bernard Shaw's devastating reviews of Parry's *Judith* and *Job* bear witness to Mendelssohn's influence. When *Elijah* reverts to *Elias*, though, the perspective seems to change along with the language. We are reminded that it was Mendelssohn who revived Bach's *St Matthew Passion*; the cellos of "Es ist genug" recall the *St John Passion*; and the *Allegro maestoso* of "Höre, Israel" could almost be Agathe waiting for Max's return in *Der Freischütz*.

There's no information about the location of this 10-year-old radio recording: the only evidence that an audience was present comes with the applause at the end. Wolfgang Sawallisch is in complete command: he was an opera conductor of enormous experience, and it shows. The agitation of the widow whose son Elijah restores to life is palpable and the scene where Jezebel and the chorus call for the prophet's death has great dramatic force, as does the *staccato* representation of the "mighty wind" that precedes the earthquake. Equally vivid is Elijah's ascent into heaven on a whirlwind, complete with trumpet fanfares.

The chorus and orchestra are the real stars of the performance. The former are full-throated when required but capable of delicacy, such as at the end of "He that shall endure to the end". The orchestra impresses with noble brass and a tender clarinet in "He watching over Israel", not to mention the flute in an unsentimentally brisk "O rest in the Lord". What is regrettably missing is the

organ, to lend weight to the choruses. Michael Volle is an authoritative Elijah, a bit wobbly in the scene with the widow. I didn't warm to the reedy tone of the tenor, Herbert Lippert, but Andrea Rost and, especially, Marjana Lipovšek are distinct assets. If you are happy with the German, this lively version will afford much pleasure.

Richard Lawrence

Mendelssohn

Symphony No 2, 'Lobgesang', Op 52

Christiane Oelze, Simona Šaturová *sops*

Ian Bostridge *ten* Chorus Sine Nomine;

North Austrian Tonkünstler Orchestra /

Andrés Orozco-Estrada

Preisler © 2 PR90796 (64' • DDD/DSD)

Selected comparisons:

LSO, Abbado (1/86) (DG) 423 143-2GH

Bergen PO, Litten (9/09) (BIS) BIS-SACD1704

A songful approach to Mendelssohn's great choral Second Symphony



Mendelssohn hoped in vain that when the *Lobgesang* was performed in English, it would be known as the "Song of Praise" – "Hymn? Certainly not!" Too many interpreters have ignored him but Andrés Orozco-Estrada does not. Most of his tempi are slightly under Mendelssohn's own but only the crypto-second-movement *Scherzo* lacks momentum. Faced with the compendious elements – chorale, counterpoint, song, sonata-form – that make up Mendelssohn's late, Gutenberg-inspired panegyric to the Word, he tends towards integration rather than the modern appetite for separation that would likely be the hallmark of "period" ensembles if they ever performed the piece.

The string section of the Tonkünstler Orchestra is no match in tonal refinement for the other residents of the Musikverein but the wind band has a smooth, sweet and authentically Viennese blend that well suits the chorale articulations, while the narrow-bore brass and dry timpani lend a welcome and complementary pungency. The Sine Nomine choir is prompt but too small in context and backwardly balanced; inner contrapuntal voices in "Die Nacht ist vergangen" and the final chorus aren't convincingly articulated.

While the two ladies are well chosen, Ian Bostridge is an inspired bit of casting: his doubt-beset watchman, at the symphony's dramatic high-point, throws us forward to the role's counterparts in *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tristan*. I mean to imply no anachronism. In a polemic concluding CUP's *Companion to Mendelssohn* (Cambridge: 1995), Leon Botstein argues that an understanding of Wagner's hidden debt to Mendelssohn should

Vocal reviews

lead interpreters of the oratorios in particular towards a more flexible approach that isn't enslaved to the sweetness and light which have drawn both devotees and detractors, in the Anglocentric world at least. This isn't to argue that Mendelssohn performance should become more proto-Wagnerian, though it does ask us to tease out what's crypto-Mendelssohnian in Wagner. In practice, Andrew Litton's recent recording addresses the issue, while Claudio Abbado's 1984 account remains on another, majestic level of inspiration.

Peter Quantrill

Monk

Songs of Ascension

Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble;

Todd Reynolds Quartet; The M6,

Montclair State University Singers

ECM New Series © ECM2154 (476 4307) (• DDD)

An ambitious, spiritual, multi-disciplined work that leaves a lasting impression



As Kyle Gann points out in his introductory note, Meredith Monk has for over four decades been transcending distinctions between the archaic and avant-garde in music

whose spiritual intensity eschews religious connotations. Logistically at least, *Songs of Ascension* is her most ambitious undertaking yet: taking its cue from the Psalms and Paul Celan (but setting neither) and commissioned for an eight-storey tower in California, the work is imbued with the notion of ascent as a metaphysical as well as a physical journey. Scored for a constantly changing assortment of voices and instruments, its 21 movements unfold more or less continuously; over half of them fall into groups linked by title, yet the musical association is less one of motivic evolution than of timbres and textures recalled in subtly altered contexts, while the others vary markedly both in length and content – culminating in “Fathom”, an extemporized cadenza for voice and shruti box (something between an accordion and harmonium), then “Ascent”, in which all the assembled performers head upwards toward an enveloping and celestial calm.

Monk is, naturally, pre-eminent among the performers – taking in choral and ensemble voices, along with violin, woodwind, percussion and string quartet. The premiere in Sonoma County must have been a *tour de force*, both visually and aurally (is a DVD release at all possible?) but this account, made at New York's Academy of Arts and Letters, has the pristine ambience typical of ECM. Those previously sceptical of Monk should certainly avail themselves of this thought-provoking experience.

Richard Whitehouse

Peñalosa

Peñalosa Missa Nunc fue pena mayor.

Sacris solemnitis. Memorare piissima.

O bone Iesu. Tribularer. Ave vera caro Christi.

Transeunte Domino. In passione positus Iesus

Anonymous Tres II Modena Tiento XIX

Ensemble Gilles Binchois (Anne-Marie Lablaude

sop David Sagastume counterten David Munderloh

ten Tim Scott Whiteley bass); Les Sacqueboutiers

(Jean-Pierre Canihac cornett Philippe Canguilhem

shawm Daniel Lassalle sackbut Laurent Lechenadec

dulcian) / Dominique Vellard ten

Glossa © GCD922305 (59' • DDD • T/D)

Lost in the shadow of Guerrero, a Spaniard at last gets his moment



Francisco de Peñalosa

(c1470–1528) has

suffered from the

relative neglect of the

Spanish polyphony

composed just before

the golden era ushered

in by Morales and Guerrero. But his music was good enough to have been mistaken for the work of more famous contemporaries, and the pieces chosen for this recording go some way to reclaiming his due. The centrepiece is a Mass based on one of the most admired Spanish songs of its time, which Peñalosa treats in a variety of ways: its distinctive melody is heard in the top voice at the start of the Mass. The song itself tells of a woman whose sorrow has no equal, and the natural association with the Virgin weaves a thread through the recital: several of the motets embrace a similar theme, to which the tendency of Spanish composers of this period to rather stark polyphony is admirably suited. You can hear this in the bare octaves that conclude the final piece on the disc – an especially striking moment.

Here Ensemble Gilles Binchois team up with Les Sacqueboutiers, who accompany the singers for most of the Mass (either in alternation or *colla parte*), while the motets are performed by one ensemble or the other. Wind ensembles of this sort were common in Spanish collegiate churches and the combination makes for quite a taut yet nicely varied sound that supports the longer spans of the Mass effectively. Hearing the voices by themselves, it crossed my mind that, in its current incarnation, Dominique Vellard's ensemble may have lost some of its distinctive colouring; but these attractive performances allow the music to speak for itself. **Fabrice Fitch**

Reich

Three Movements. The Desert Music*

*Chorus Sine Nomine; Lower Austria

Tonkünstler Orchestra / Kristjan Järvi

Chandos © CHS45091 (61' • DDD/DSD • T)

Selected comparison – compiled as above:

Tilson Thomas (9/97) (NONE) 7559 79451-2

Music from the period of Reich's retreat into orchestral sonorities



For reasons he explained in the March 2011 issue of *Gramophone*, Steve Reich has never been at ease with orchestras, as either social or acoustic beings. *The Desert Music*

and *Three Movements* come from that bewildering period of Reich's career when, after the Midas touch of late 1970s masterworks like *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ*, *Music for 18 Musicians* and *Tebillim*, he began to write for orchestra, which felt like a retreat to those of us who knew his music was special precisely because it wasn't conceived for regular classical performers.

Three Movements (1986), alongside its sister piece *The Four Sections*, represents the nadir of Reich's association with orchestral music, and Kristjan Järvi has nothing of substance to add to the “official” recording with the LSO under Michael Tilson Thomas, mainly because there isn't much to add. After the structural revolutions of *Drumming* and *Music for Eighteen Musicians*, both tailor-made for Reich's own ensemble, performers hardened to the demands of sustaining labyrinthine repetitions over biblical timeframes, *Three Movements* feels lightweight and dinky; *The Desert Music* at least unfolds with Reich's familiar gravitas and structural impulsiveness.

Again, Tilson Thomas provides the reference recording – his 1984 performance with members of Reich's Ensemble embedded inside the Brooklyn Philharmonic and Chorus – and, again, Järvi lacks a personal angle. MTT's orchestral textures are clear-cut, precise, meticulously detailed. Järvi's feel underdone and peaky; for a totem example compare the shrill glare of Tilson Thomas's high woodwinds in the second movement to the anaemic tones here at around 1'02". On a positive note, the format allows the Chorus Sine Nomine's muscular singing to shine; although in the case of *Three Movements*, SACD just means you can hear better how bad it is. **Philip Clark**

Schumann

Requiem, Op 148*. Der Königssohn, Op 116^b.

Nachtlid, Op 108

^aSihylla Rubens sop ^{ab}Ingeborg Danz contr

^{ab}Christoph Prégardien ten ^{ab}Adolph Seidel bar

^{ab}Yorck Felix Speer bass

Saarbrücken Chamber Choir; German Radio

Philharmonic Orchestra Saarbrücken

Kaiserslautern / Georg Grün

Hänssler Classic © CD93 270 (72' • DDD • T)

Recorded live at the former Abbey Church of

St Maximin, Trier, June 5, 2010

Requiem – selected comparison:

Klee (7/84) (EMI) 631520-2



On this IRELAND

An imaginative recital from Tynan and Burnside

'An Irish Songbook'

Barber The Desire for Hermitage. St Ita's Vision. Solitary Hotel **Bax** To Eire **Bridge** Lean out of the window (Goldenhair) **Cage** The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs **Dunhill** The Cloths of Heaven **Harty** The Stranger's Grave **Howells** Flood **Ireland** Tutto è sciolto **CW Orr** Bahnhofstrasse **Traditional** At the mid hour of night (arr Britten). Avenging and Bright (arr Britten). Bid adieu (arr Pendleton). The Last Rose of Summer (arr Britten). The Lost Lover (arr Moeran). Marry Me Now (arr Hughes). The Minstrel Boy (arr Britten). Oh Men from the Fields (arr Hughes). The Roving Dingle Boy (arr Moeran). Sail on, sail on (arr Britten). The Salley Gardens (arr Britten). The Tinker's Daughter (arr Moeran)

Ailish Tynan sop Iain Burnside pf

Signum © SIBCD239 (63) • DDD • T



This is far from being a conventional Irish song collection, such as John McCormack might have offered in recording's early days.

Irish soprano Ailish

Tynan, no doubt prompted by the ever-imaginative accompanist, Iain Burnside, has devised a sequence of 23 songs that are mainly rarities. There are, for example, six folksong arrangements by Benjamin Britten, only one of which is at all familiar, his setting of Yeats's popular poem "The Salley Gardens". Several are settings of tunes from the collection, *Moore's Irish Melodies*, including "The Last Rose of Summer".

Typically, they all have distinctive accompaniments, some of them little related to the melodies above.

Another theme of the collection is the work of James Joyce, not just from his collections of poems, *Chamber Music* and *Pomes Penyeach*, but extracts from his two exploratory novels, *Ulysses* ("Solitary Hotel", set by Samuel Barber) and *Finnegans Wake* ("The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs", set by John Cage to an accompaniment of knocking on the piano lid). Other Joyce settings, such as Herbert Howells's "Flood" from *Pomes Penyeach* (with rushing accompaniment) and "Oh Men from the Fields" set by Herbert Hughes, are more conventional but always sensitive. Barber is represented

by three songs, including the remarkable dedicated setting of "St Ita's Vision", a medieval prayer translated into modern English by Seán Ó Faoláin. Other composers represented include some unjustly neglected, such as Thomas Dunhill, as well as EJ Moeran and Frank Bridge, making up a most attractive sequence.

Ailish Tynan's bright soprano, very well controlled with clean attack on high notes, is perhaps too little varied in tone for sustained listening, a minor disadvantage. Predictably, Burnside is always a most sensitive accompanist, not least in some of Britten's tricky piano-writing. A most distinctive disc, well recorded, and well worth investigating. **Edward Greenfield**

INTERVIEW

Ailish Tynan

This is a follow-up to an earlier disc I did with Iain Burnside where we explored the music of the Irish composer Herbert Hughes. That was a wonderful experience because I didn't know most of the repertoire beforehand. It's shameful, really, that it took a Scottish man to tell an Irish woman what's good about Irish music! Then Iain suggested we do a selection of rather more modern music (although there's still some Hughes amongst it). So there's Irish material arranged by the likes of Samuel Barber, John Cage and Benjamin Britten. Including the Britten was at least my ideal Iain wanted to include the James Joyce songbook, which I'd never heard of but which spoke volumes to me.

The best of Anglo-Irish relations can be found in the Britten arrangements of Irish folk songs. He understood and captures perfectly their Irish

qualities - the sparse accompaniment to the flow of the words, the changes of colour, the musical lilt of Irish phrasing.

Irish music has had a bad reputation historically, of all being fiddly diddly. And people with not great voices have recorded Irish albums and made everything sound the same. But it's extremely classy, and demands the same rigour as does any great music. Moeran's arrangement of "The Tinker's Daughter", for instance, is very challenging. The phrases are very long and you really have to put your guts into them to work to get the text out.

You have to use the language to find the colours, but I had to be schematic about when to preserve my natural Irish accent. If I really let it go people wouldn't be able to understand it! So you have to go with the head sometimes rather than the heart.

Interview by James Inverne

Vocal reviews

► *Der Königsohn* – selected comparison:

Nagano (7/11) (FARA) B108059

Nachtlied – selected comparison:

Gardiner (A/99) (DG) 457 660-2AH2

Schumann's troublesome late choral music approached with patchy success



The wrench from the twilight opening movement of the Requiem to the foursquare sequences of the “Te decet hymnus”, from the alto’s yearning “Qui Mariam absolvisti” to the unconvinced insistence of “Confutatis maledictis”, encapsulates the problems with Schumann’s late music that are unlikely to vanish however persuasive the interpreters. This disc shows how those problems are more focused in his specifically sacred works than in those which spring from a spiritual impulse in one who confessed himself “religious without a religion”. Light and enlightenment were vital symbols for Schumann and the *Nachtlied* of 1849 evokes a kind of dawn of the soul with the acute sensibility that only fitfully illuminates the Requiem (and Mass) of 1852. The later works were composed to order for the ensembles of Düsseldorf whose direction Schumann ill-advisedly agreed to undertake; so too were the four choral ballads of 1851 but their bardic subject matter – in *Der Königsohn*, a young man’s rite of passage towards his kingly inheritance – seems to have summoned the poetic impulse we associate with the best of Schumann.

Such varied demands are met here with patchy success. The soloists lend distinction, especially Christoph Prégardien as the young king-to-be, and Georg Grün’s flexible direction doesn’t undermine the pulse that each movement needs if it’s to sustain any impression of coherence, but his Saarbrücken ensembles don’t match the polish of the comparative versions listed above. There are one or two coughs but no indication in the booklet that the recording, in a large and boomy church in Trier, was made live.

Peter Quantrill

Un Camino de Santiago

The music in the 17th century on the way of

St James of Compostela

For The Feast-Day of St. James, apostle – Procedens Jesus vidit Jacobum; O beate Dei athleta Jacobe. Following The Rhône... – Justes, chacun se présente; Chantez au Seigneur; Ce qui me plaît advantage. At The Crossroads... – Bienheureuse est une âme; Fantaisie à 3 sur Une jeune fille; Di Jacopo si canti. In Languedoc and Gascony... : N’espérez plus, mes yeux; Cancion real francesa in echo; De cor, de bous celebrats, cantats tousis. In Aragon and Castile... – Gaita española (sobre La Girometa); Canzon per canto e basso; Jacara (baila de Jaca); Folias para mi Señora Dona Tarolilla. In

The Church of Leon... – Repicavan las campanillas – Repicavan, gefigureert door; Canten dos Jilguerillos. In Galicia... – El baxel esta en la playa; Gaita francesa; Vuelve barquilla. En el porta de Santiago! – Canzon La Benedetta; Vilancico de nacions, de Gascuña, Aragon y Cataluña

Ensemble La Fenice

Ricercar © RIC 312 (63' • DDD)

A thoughtful journey to Santiago that pushes forward into the Baroque



The idea of a CD reflecting the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela is not in itself original, but this one does offer something new. Whereas the New London Consort (L’Oiseau-Lyre, 7/92) concentrated on the medieval period, and the Monteverdi Choir (SDG, 6/05) edged into the Renaissance, Jean Tubéry and Ensemble La Fenice have taken inspiration from a decorative map of 1648 showing the routes from France into northern Spain; perhaps the first ever baroque take on the subject. That map is reproduced in the booklet, though inevitably too small to make much of, and getting one’s head round the musicological background is likewise a tough task. But this in any case is not a historical reconstruction; as Tubéry tells us “the spiritual path travelled is of much more importance than the journey itself”.

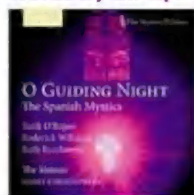
The answer, then, is to surrender to the various sounds paraded before us as representative of what might have been heard by a pilgrim in the mid-17th century, ranging from chant to popular songs (often with sacred texts) and from dances to sophisticated ensemble pieces. Much of it is either by the anonymous or the obscure, though names such as Du Caurroy, Moulinié, Salaverde and Falconieri also appear. How much this unusual mix genuinely evokes the camino itself is debatable, though it does follow the route (church bells marking each change of location) and the ear could hardly fail to recognise the move from France to Spain. Moreover, the performances by six multi-tasking musicians have an intimacy and tender beauty that ought to inspire a suitably decorous state of mind in the listener, led by Tubéry’s eloquent cornett and Arianna Savall’s small-voiced but pleasingly guileless singing. No Chaucerian bawdiness here; this disc is both parfit and gentil.

Lindsay Kemp

‘O Guiding Night’

O’Regan fleeting, God. O vera digna hostia. Beloved, all things ceased Byrchmore The Dark Night. Prayer of St Teresa of Ávila. A Birthday R Williams O Guiding Night. Let nothing trouble you. O Adonai The Sixteen / Harry Christophers with Robert Quinney pf/org
Coro © COR106090 (65' • DDD • T/D)

New and exquisite settings of words by the Spanish Mystics



In 2009 The Sixteen’s “Padre Pio” (6/09) featured commissions from MacMillan, Panufnik and Will Todd. This new release

composing trio focuses on texts by two of the 16th- and 17th-century Spanish Mystics, St Teresa of Ávila and St John of the Cross.

Each composer has set the same three texts and much of the satisfaction of this programme derives from comparing their differing word-setting approaches. In general terms, Tarik O’Regan favours repeating, hypnotic ostinatos, whereas Ruth Byrchmore’s approach is more intense and dramatic. Roderick Williams’s innate lyricism bursts through and sounds the most naturally and comfortably singable.

Several highlights stand out: the organ outburst at the start of Byrchmore’s *The Dark Night*, which is reminiscent of Holst’s *Choral Fantasia* and the falling vocal shapes which seem to echo the “weep, O weep”, from Britten’s *Hymn to St Cecilia*, and the melting harmonies of Williams’s *Let nothing trouble you*. Each of the three standalone pieces that complete the programme are remarkable. Williams’s *O Adonai* separates the singers both spatially and in terms of key, creating a haunting effect, while Byrchmore’s award-winning setting of Rossetti’s *A Birthday* grows from the fragile to a beguiling and exuberant intensity. O’Regan’s *O vera digna hostia* is exquisitely beautiful and wholesome. Robert Quinney gives splendid support on both organ and piano, and the recording is well-nigh perfect. **Malcolm Riley**

‘Slovenija!’

Adamič Primroses (Trobentice)^a. Lullaby (Uspavanka)^a Gerbič Where? (Kam?)^b. I’ll watch the girls spinning (Pojdem na prejo)^b. In the Night (V noči)^{ab} Geržinič Sad Letter (Žalostno pismo)^b. Autumn Song (Jesenska pesem)^b. Dusk (Mrak)^a. Spring Delight (Pomladna radost)^a Ipavec Spring Rest (Pomladni počitek)^{ab}. In the Night (V noči)^b. Wild Rose and Ivy (Divja roža in bršljan)^b. Spring Night (Pomladna noč)^a. Poppy Glows (Mak žari)^b. Ladybird (Božji volek)^b. In a Memorial Book (V spominsko knjigo)^a. Spring Breeze (Pomladni veter)^a Jenko Abroad (Na tujih tleh)^{ab} Lajović My Fatherland (Mesec v izbi)^a. Jamie, come try me (Kaj bi le gledal)^a. Serenada^b Mašek Under the Window (Pod oknom)^b Pavčič Grandpa Single-Leg (Dedek samonog)^b. Lullaby No 2 (Uspavanka II)^a. Ciciban, Cicifuj^a Prelovec Autumn Night (Jesenska noč)^a Škerjanc Autumn Song (Jesenska pesem)^b. Vision (Vizija)^b. Evening Impression (Večerna impresija)^a. Moon over Mountain Pass (Počitek pod goro)^b. Song (Pesem)^a. White



EDITOR'S CHOICE

Clouds (Beli oblaki)*

*Bernarda Fink *mez* bMarcos Fink *bass-bar*

Anthony Spiri *pf*

Harmonia Mundi © HMC90 2065 (70' • DDD • T/I)

Songs from a central European tradition sung with sensitivity and understanding



Slovenija is hemmed in by Austria, Croatia and Italy. The inherited musical tradition, clearly influenced by the geographical surroundings, appears to

be primarily vocal and Harmonia Mundi offers here a collection of 32 19th- and 20th-century Slovenian solos and duets sung by brother and sister Marcos and Bernarda Fink, born in Argentina into a Slovenian family. Bernarda Fink has a ravishing upper range and Marcos is a warmly attractive baritone partner while pianist Anthony Spiri seems to take naturally to the repertoire.

Each composer has contributed strikingly to this most important musical genre in their heritage. The romantic style of the music is communicative, and, with no strong individual composing personality emerging, each of the settings is memorable in its own way. The two opening soprano songs by Anton Lajovic immediately catch the ear: the first beguilingly evokes moonbeams; the second, "Jamie, come try me", is a winsome invitation from a maiden enticing her lover to respond to her passionate eagerness. Both beautifully sung, they are followed by the baritone's warm "Serenade". A lighter touch emerges in Josip Pavčič's "Grandpa Single-Leg" and the catchy "Ciciban" ("little bird"), while Emil Adamič's charming "Primroses" – "trumpeting loudly, telling their fellows that spring has come" – is infectious.

Most of the songs are nostalgic, like the closing setting of Davorin Jenko, "Abroad", whose author affectionately remembers his hometown's meadows and woodland. Throughout, the singing of both artists is wonderfully sensitive and persuasively understanding on a disc that will give continuing pleasure, vividly recorded and admirably documented. **Ivan March**

'White Night'

Buene Allsang Groven Margjit Hjukse, Op 48 **Larsen** Polonaise. Sun prayer (Solbønn). Soloists' Waltz (Solistvals Knut) **Traditional** Gropen (arr Larsen). Gjendines Lullaby (Gjendines Bådnålt – arr LEriksson). I lay down so late (Jeg lagde mig så sildig – arr Alnæs). Jesus to savour your sweet union (Jesus din sote forening å smake – arr Nystedt). Merciful Jesus – Jesus guide my thoughts (Nådigste Jesus – Jesus styr du mine tankar). With Jesus I will journey (Med Jesus vil eg fara – arr Sommero). Wedding March from Valsøyfjord/Aure (Brueremarsj fra Valsøyfjord/Aure – arr Sommero and Pedersen)

Berit Opheim Versto *folk sgr*

Gjermund Larsen *vn/Hardanger fiddle*

Norwegian Soloists' Choir / Grete Pedersen

BIS © BIS-SACD1871 (62' • DDD)

'Strid'

Allendorf/Rachmaninov Jesus, to taste your sweet union (Jesus, din sote forening å smake/ Blagoslavi) **Bakken** The Lost Sheep (Den ville sau) **Brorsen** Hallelujah, our struggle ends (Halleluja, vår stride er endt) **Nystedt** The Bridal March of Myllargutens (Myllargutens Brudemarsj). Behold the beautiful light of the sun (Se, solens skjonne lys og prakt) **Traditional** They are only looking/The young girl (Dei spykje barr'/Den lisle jenta). Give me your hand/ So he gave (Kom mæ händi/No hev han gjeve). When my eye, tired by toil (Når mitt oie, trett av moie) **Traditional/Bruckner** O, the deep, deep love of Jesus (Å, for djup i Jesu kjærlik/Locus iste) **Traditional/Grieg** Sir Ole/Withered, fallen (Herr Ole/Blegnet, segnet) **Traditional/Tchaikovsky** My heart always dwells (Mitt hjerte alltid vanker)/Cherubic Hymn **Vangberg** God grant us to live here (Gud unde as her at leve saa)

Oslo Chamber Choir / Håkon Daniel Nystedt

2L © 2L073SACD (58' • DDD • T/I)

Norwegian folk music in probing dialogues with the classical tradition



BIS's programme "White Night: Impressions of Norwegian folk music" opens with Gjermund Larsen's Polonaise, at times seeming like a New Age take on non-electric Steeleye Span. This first impression is misleading: Larsen's other items, all derived from dance forms, follow different patterns;

Gropen and *Solistvals* in particular are highly rhythmic. *Solbønn*, like the Polonaise given in a joint arrangement by Larsen and Gunnar Eriksson, is more soulful, tapping the deep-rooted melancholia in the Nordic psyche, evident also in the beautiful folksong settings by Eyvind Alnæs and Knut Nystedt.

Alnæs, Nystedt and Henning Sommero exemplify the more conventional approach to folksong but Grete Pedersen's programme encompasses a wide range of styles, to which the Norwegian Soloists' Choir rise with gusto and finesse, aided by Larsen's committed fiddling and Berit Opheim Versto's distinctive vocal style. The jewel in the crown is Eivind Groven's Margjit Hjukse (1964), a cantata for folk singers, chorus and Hardanger fiddle. Highly unconventional, it looks forward to the more radical *Allsang* (2009) by yet another Eivind, Buene. *Allsang* is as expressive of its unconventionality of idiom as it is the scenario, of folk singers singing

over the newly deceased, easing their souls to the afterlife.

The 2L disc "Strid", with the Oslo Chamber Choir, represents a rather different take on Norway's folk heritage, on one hand traditional and on the other taking enough liberties to upset purists. The stylistic range is still wide, as shown by the various songs in the Stev tradition and Johannes Bakken's *Den ville sau* (1938) with its dissonant herding-call keening. Although not present in person, Berit Opheim Versto's presence is felt here too, with four of the 12 tracks containing versions of tunes provided by or learnt from her. The juxtapositions and interleavings are the most unusual aspect of this programme, with folksongs dovetailed into or sung in parallel with pieces by Rachmaninov, Grieg, Bruckner and Tchaikovsky, as well as other folk tunes. The contexts are well prepared and immaculately sung and recorded, and the overall effect is really quite affecting.

Guy Rickards

'Voyage'

Dvořák Ten Biblical Songs, B185 Op 99.

Eight Love Songs, B160 Op 83 **Mussorgsky**

The Nursery **R Strauss** Mädchenblumen, Op 22

Schoeck Ich habe mich dem Heil entschworen,

Op 33 No 8. Dämmerung senkte sich von oben,

Op 19a No 2. Auf ein kind, Op 20 No 1

Martina Janková *sop* **Gérard Wyss** *pf*

Supraphon © SU4046-2 (70' • DDD • T/I)

A recital to treasure from a Czech soprano based in Zurich



This is a particularly fine collection of song-cycles, very beautifully sung by Martina Janková, who has a wonderfully free, sweet upper range (she reaches

up for high notes exquisitely, without a hint of strain or wobble). Her phrasing too is magically, richly flexible. In short, her vocal colouring is incredibly fresh and young-sounding, yet she has been a member of the Zurich Opera House ensemble since 1998! She is admirably accompanied by Gérard Wyss and has chosen the programme herself, telling us in the accompanying note that "these songs accompany through my life like good friends".

Her "voyage" begins with Mussorgsky's witty paradise of childhood (each song delightfully full of individuality), continues with Dvořák's glorious cycle of *Love Songs*, sung in her own language, then includes four richly romantic Lieder of Strauss, and ends with Dvořák's lovely *Biblical Songs* – "Oh, my shepherd in the Lord", "Songs of gladness will I sing thee" and the touching "Hear oh Lord my bitter cry" are unforgettable. Those top notes are really something never to forget. A disc to treasure. **Ivan March**

Opera

The 'English' Tristan • Pergolesi in the opera house • Treasures from the Met

Beethoven

Fidelio

Nina Stemme *sop*..... Leonore
Jonas Kaufmann *ten*..... Florestan
Christof Fischesser *bass*..... Rocco
Falk Struckmann *bass-bar*..... Don Pizarro
Rachel Harnisch *sop*..... Marzelline
Christoph Strehl *ten*..... Jaquino
Peter Mattei *bar*..... Don Fernando
Arnold Schonberg Choir; Mahler Chamber Orchestra; Lucerne Festival Orchestra / Claudio Abbado

Decca ④ 2 478 2551DH2 (115 • DDD • S/T/t)

Recorded live at the Kultur- und Kongresszentrum, Lucerne, August 12 & 15, 2010

Selected comparisons:

Furtwängler (5/54*) (NAXO) 8 111020/21

Klemperer (6/62*) (EMI) 966703-2

Klemperer (2/04) (TEST) SBT 12 1328

Abbado's the real star of a Lucerne Fidelio with a sparkling cast



It was Abbado's second Berlin Philharmonic symphony cycle from 2001 which thrust him more or less unexpectedly into the ranks of the immortals where

Beethoven is concerned. And it was seven years after that, in Reggio Emilia in 2008, that he conducted his first *Fidelio*. Like Furtwängler in his 1953 studio recording, Abbado leads a viscerally charged performance that flies to the very heart of the matter, and does so in a version which, stripping away much of the spoken dialogue, recreates Beethoven's lofty Singspiel as musical metatheatrical.

The recording derives from two semi-staged concert performances, the audience happily sensed but not heard. Technically the recording is first-rate but, then, you need no sonic-stage trickery in the dungeon scene in a performance which reveals as exactly as this how Beethoven's own orchestrations are key. One of the many glories of this thrillingly articulated *Fidelio* is the playing of the basses and lower strings, sharp-featured and black as the pit of Acheron.

The revised spoken text is by stage director Tatjana Gürbaca. In Act 1 she prunes and rewrites, minimising the text's domesticities; in Act 2 she preserves the melodrama but omits most else. There is no breathless announcement from Jaquino after the trumpet

calls, no heart-stopping exchange between Florestan and Leonore before "O namenlose Freude". After Pizarro's entry, Act 2 becomes a choral cantata, albeit one happily devoid of an inserted *Leonore* No 3.

The cast is mostly distinguished. If there has been a better Marzelline on record than Rachel Harnisch, I have not heard her. The same might be said of Christof Fischesser's Rocco and Falk Struckmann's Pizarro; not that one forgets Gottlob Frick (Klemperer's Rocco and Furtwängler's) or Hans Hotter, Klemperer's Pizarro on his unforgettable live Covent Garden performance, a true theatre *Fidelio*, more interestingly cast than the fabled but slightly more sedate EMI studio version.

Nina Stemme is very much the Leonore *de nos jours*, less human than Jurinac live at Covent Garden but apt to the newer version's less domesticated vision. I could have done without Jonas Kaufmann's 12-second *crescendo* on Florestan's annunciatory "Gott!" – René Kollo did something similar for Bernstein (DG, 10/78*) – more vocal stunt than human utterance and offering a foretaste of vocal discolorations to come.

But that, in the end, is a trifle. This is the best-conducted *Fidelio* since Furtwängler's; a joy to experience and a privilege to possess.

Richard Osborne

Boughton

The Queen of Cornwall

Philip Tebb *bar*..... Watchman
Patricia Orr *mez*..... Brangwain
Neal Davies *bass*..... King Mark
Heather Shipp *mez*..... Queen Iseult
Peter Wilman *ten*..... Sir Andret
Jacques Imbrailo *bar*..... Sir Tristram
Joan Rodgers *sop*..... Iseult of Brittany
Elizabeth Weisberg *sop*..... Damsel

The London Chorus; New London Orchestra / Ronald Corp

Dutton ④ 2 CDLX7256 (114 • DDD • S/T)

A Tristan opera by a composer who aspired to be an 'English Wagner'



We are apt to forget that after 216 consecutive performances of *The Immortal Hour* in 1922 and 1923, Rutland Boughton was hailed as the most significant

British operatic composer of his generation.

His vision of a cycle of Arthurian music dramas

took form at a series of Glastonbury Festivals beginning in 1914 with the first performance of *The Immortal Hour* as its centrepiece.

Boughton's cycle was not completed until 1945, by which time the Glastonbury Festivals were a memory, shrouded in a mixture of scandal and political notoriety. Nevertheless, he remained loyal to his operatic convictions and, besides the cycle, wrote a number of other operas, some them on Arthurian themes.

The Queen of Cornwall dates from 1924, by which time Boughton had moved on to a full and productive assimilation of Wagner's instrumental conception of opera and flexible vocal declamation. His understanding of the process, clothed in gorgeous orchestration, also enabled him to incorporate his set pieces (using additional Hardy poems) without disrupting the continuum of the two acts; nor does his original extensive and fertile use of the chorus as a Greek-style choral narrator or as accompaniment to the soloists seem stilted.

Heather Shipp as the conflicted Queen Iseult brings her music alive, especially in Act 1, with her long, intense monologue and "aria" ("I dream that the dearest I ever knew"), as does Sir Tristram, sung by Jacques Imbrailo. Their duet "Yes, Love, true is it sadness suits me best" is a poignant gem but perhaps most heart-rending is Iseult of Brittany's lament "Indulge no more" sung splendidly here by Joan Rodgers. This operatic music of the 1920s may have its roots in the late 19th century but when it is performed with such fervour and control as it is here (for which Ronald Corp should be applauded), the "anachronism" matters not a jot. For me this opera was quite a revelation and it makes one wonder what other treasures of Boughton await rediscovery. **Jeremy Dibble**

Cavalli

Artemisia

Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli *sop*..... Artemisia
Roberta Mameli *sop*..... Artemia
Valentina Coladonato *sop*..... Oronta
Maarten Engeltjes *countertenor*..... Meraspe
Andrea Arrivabene *countertenor*..... Alindo
Marina Bartoli *sop*..... Ramiro
Silvia Frigato *sop*..... Eurillo
Salvo Vitale *bass*..... Indamoro
Alberto Allegranza *ten*..... Erisbe
Alessandro Giangrande *countertenor*..... Niso
La Venexiana / Claudio Cavina
Glossa ④ 3 GCD920918 (148 • DDD • T/U)

Terrific music and cast for this largely forgotten (and rather confusing) opera



The fourth-century BC Mausoleum at Halicarnassus was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It lasted for centuries before being destroyed in an earthquake. If you go to the British Museum you can see two statues, larger than life, which might be of the eponymous Mausolus and his sister-cum-wife.

It's the latter who is the subject of Cavalli's opera. The historical Artemisia was renowned for her devotion: it was said that she mixed the ashes of Mausolus into a drink, so as to prolong their union. In the opera, Artemisia mourns the death of her husband and swears to marry the man who catches his murderer; but she has already fallen in love with "Clitarco", not realising that he is Meraspe, who killed Mausolus (by accident, Meraspe says).

If you are already confused, hang in there, because it gets worse. Having two characters with near-identical names doesn't help (even the libretto printed in the booklet gets in a muddle on the last page). In brief, then: Artemisia loves Meraspe, and vice versa; Ramiro loves Artemia but she too loves Meraspe; Artemisia is also loved by Alindo, whose deserted fiancée Oronta has disguised herself as a man. Then there's a comic subplot for the servants.

The characters come and go in a series of short scenes. The preponderance of high voices makes it hard to tell the characters apart, so it's essential to follow the libretto. The music is terrific and so is the cast. The singers are especially adept at putting across the dialogue, which has the vigour of a staged performance. Cavalli is prodigal in his provision of laments: the opera opens with Artemisia at the Mausoleum, and there's a particularly fine example for Artemia, "Ardo, sospiro, e piango". Both singers sometimes "bend" their notes expressively.

The orchestra is perfect: six plucked continuo instruments plus single strings, which accompany some of the arias. The booklet could do with a synopsis; and, eight centuries before Mohammed, "Scitico" can hardly mean Shiite (the reference is to a Scythian arrow). But this is a triumph for Claudio Cavina and La Venexiana.

Richard Lawrence

Mozart

Così fan tutte – Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo. Donne mie, le fate a tanti. **Don Giovanni** – Madamina, il catalogo è questo. Deh, vieni alla finestra. Fin ch'han dal vino. **Le nozze di Figaro** – Bravo, signor padrone!...Se vuol ballare. Ehi, sor paggio!...Non più andrai. Tutto è disposto...

Aprite un po' quegli occhi. Hai già vinta la causa!...Vedrò mentr'io sospiro. Così dunque tradisci...Aspri rimorsi atroci, K432/421a. Alcandro, lo confesso...Non so d'onde viene, K512. Mentre ti lascio, o figlia, K513. Per questa bella mano, K612

Ildebrando d'Arcangelo *bass-bar* Orchestra of the Teatro Regio, Turin / Gianandrea Noseda DG 477 9297GH (61' • DDD • T/D)

A sonorous bass-baritone but a lack of engagement with Mozart's characters



The sonorous bass-baritone of Ildebrando d'Arcangelo, with its oaken middle register and ringing top notes, is certainly an impressive instrument. Yet shorn of his magnetic stage presence, his singing often lacks both "face" and elegance of style. Best are Leporello's Catalogue Aria, sung with lubricious relish if no great variety, and Figaro's embittered tirade against the female sex. But his gruff, graceless accounts of "Se vuol ballare" and "Non più andrai" miss any sense of ironic mockery; Don Giovanni's serenade is dull and forthright; and while he brings a fair swagger to the first part of Guglielmo's over-the-top showpiece "Rivolgete", there is no change of tone, no gleeful amusement, after the two girls have stomped off in indignation.

In the four concert arias, d'Arcangelo's fine, firm resonance rarely compensates for a lack of engagement with the characters' plights. The text of "Mentre ti lascio" speaks of grief and terror, though you would never suspect so from d'Arcangelo's sober, unvaried singing. In the two out-and-out bass arias, "Non so d'onde viene" and "Per questa bella mano", he is tested both by the low notes and the bouts of coloratura, vaguely sketched rather than precisely articulated. It is partly Mozart's fault that "Per questa bella mano" tends to sound lugubrious rather than, as the text invites, playfully amorous; and the double bass obbligato can't help seeming faintly grotesque on the larger, more unwieldy modern instrument. That said, the accompaniments throughout this recital are uninspiring: solid and string-heavy, with woodwind and horns missing far too many tricks in Mozart's chuckling, subversive commentaries. **Richard Wigmore**

Nyman

Facing Goya

Winnie Böwe *sop*...Craniometrist 1/Eugenicist 1/..... Art Critic 1/Microbiologist
Marie Angel *sop*..... Craniometry Assistant 1/..... Art Critic 2/Genetic Research Doctor
Hilary Summers *contr*..... Art Banker/Widow
Harry Nicol *ten*..... Craniometry Assistant 2/..... Eugenicist 2/Art Critic 3/..... Chief Executive of a Bio-Tech Company

Omar Ebrahim *bar*..... Craniometrist 2/..... Art Critic 4/Genetic Academic/Goya
Michael Nyman Band / Michael Nyman
MN Records ② MNRC121/2 (134' • DDD • S/T)
From Warner Classics 0927 45342-2 (2/03)
Includes bonus CD of excerpts from the operas *Man and Boy: Dada* (MNRC101/2) and *Love Counts* (MNRC111/2)

A welcome reissue of Michael Nyman's almost-grand opera



First performed in Spain in 2000 then extensively revised for a second "premiere" in Karlsruhe in 2002, *Facing Goya* still ranks as Nyman's most ambitious operatic work to date. Divided into four acts, lasting well over two hours, featuring five singers and scored for a large ensemble (effectively an expanded version of the Michael Nyman Band), it comes close to "grand" opera in design, which perhaps explains why the work has been overshadowed by the composer's more approachable chamber operas.

Described by Nyman as an "opera of ideas", *Facing Goya* reconstructs a scenario wherein the Spanish painter Francesco Goya's skull, which is found missing when his remains are exhumed from the cemetery at La Chartreuse some 60 years after his death, is rediscovered and its DNA extracted in order to clone the artist. The opera's historical sweep is wide, ranging from a 19th-century craniometry lab in Act 1, via 1930s national socialist Germany in Act 2, to a present-day bio-tech company's laboratory in Acts 3 and 4.

The figure of Goya is somewhat peripheral at times, fading into the background when the pros and cons of craniometry, eugenics, the Aryan ideal, degenerate art or genetic mutation are argued among the opera's characters. But the rather disparate nature of the plot lies in sharp contrast to Nyman's own direct and visceral musical language and the opera's success lies in the manner in which the composer weaves a number of memorable musical themes around the central character of the Art Banker. Nyman's trademark propulsive rhythmic bass-lines pepper the score from time to time, such as "The size of the brain" in Act 1, but there are also moments of tender reflection here, notably in the final, poignant aria "Forgive me", where Goya is left alone on his hands and knees, desperately trying to put the pieces of his own skull back together.

A reissue of the Warner Classics recording originally released in 2002, with excellent performances by Hilary Summers as the Art Banker and Omar Ebrahim as Goya himself, *Facing Goya* is a fascinating example of post-opera at the turn of the 21st century.

Pwyl ap Slôn

Pergolesi

L'Olimpiade

Raffaella Milanesi *sop* Aristeia
Ann-Beth Solvang *sop* Argene
Olga Pasichnyk *sop* Megacle
Jennifer Rivera *sop* Licida
Martin Oro *countertenor* Alcandro
Jeffrey Francis *ten* Clistene
Markus Brutscher *ten* Aminta
Academia Montis Regalis /
Alessandro de Marchi

Deutsche Harmonia Mundi (B) 88697 80771-2
(3h 47' • DDD • S/T/L)

Recorded live at the Landestheater, Innsbruck,
August 6, 8, 10 & 12, 2010

The first complete recording of an
opera that made Pergolesi's reputation



Metastasio's libretto
L'Olimpiade is an
amorous intrigue that
takes place at the ancient
Olympic Games. First
set to music in 1733 by
Caldara, only a year

later Vivaldi's setting was produced in Venice.
In January 1735 another new version was
unveiled in Rome by Pergolesi; initially a
failure, the opera was part of the trilogy of
works that rapidly established its composer's
posthumous fame, along with his celebrated
Stabat mater and the comic intermezzo *La
serva padrona*. But in modern times
L'Olimpiade has lagged far behind: this live
performance from last year's Innsbruck Early
Music Festival is the opera's first unabridged
period-instrument recording.

Academia Montis Regalis deliver a vivid
interpretation that advocates Pergolesi as a
musical dramatist of greater versatility and
imagination than most of us will have hitherto
suspected. The proto-classical overture is
given a suitably athletic performance; string-
playing can sometimes seem waspish but
Alessandro de Marchi galvanises the dramatic
pacing by encouraging animated ritornellos to
crash in breathlessly after the final cadences
of the long reams of recitatives (always sung
with plenty of characterisation). Jennifer
Rivera dashing dispatches the heroic arias
of the conceited Licida, whose abandoned
lover Argene is sung ardently by Ann-Beth
Solvang; both sopranos use more vibrato
than is ideal for the precise sonorities of
period instruments, although Pergolesi's
tender setting of Licida's "Mentre dormi"
is sensitively done (though I'm not sure
about the hummed cadenza – no doubt
it worked in the theatre). Tremulous
tenor Markus Brutscher camps up Aminta's
early contributions but plays it straight to
telling effect when he eventually resolves
upon selfless heroism in Act 3. Jeffrey
Francis's muscular singing suits the
Olympic host King Clistene. Raffaella

Milanesi and Olga Pasichnyk are outstanding
as the beleaguered lovers Aristeia and
Megacle; their bittersweet duet "Ne' giorni
tuoi felice" concludes Act 1 elegantly. The
last few scenes of Act 2 constitute the intense
emotional peak of the drama: Megacle's
solemn lament "Se cerca, se dice", as he is
forced to relinquish Aristeia, is an
unpredictable aria of impressive complexity
and power; Aristeia's subsequent stormy
rejection of Licida is thrilling ("Tu me da me
dividi") and is followed swiftly by the jilted
Argene's venomous rage at the faithless
Licida ("No, la speranza"); the act culminates
in the guilty Licida's bitter self-reproach upon
hearing of his friend's apparent suicide. This
fantastic sequence suggests that Pergolesi
briefly ranked alongside the most thrilling
creators of 18th-century *opera seria*.

David Vickers

Rossini

La cambiale di matrimonio

Vito Priante *bass* Tobia Mill
Julija Samsonova *sop* Fanny
Daniele Zanfardino *ten* Edoardo Milfort
Giulio Mastrototaro *bass* Slook
Tomasz Wija *bass* Norton
Francesca Russo Ermolli *mez* Clarina
Württemberg Philharmonic Orchestra /
Christopher Franklin

Naxos (B) 8 660302 (72' • DDD • N/S)

Recorded live at the Kurhaus, Bad Wildbad, Germany,
July 8, 14 & 16, 2006

Selected comparison:

Viotti (7/91) (CLAV) 50 9101

Michelangelo (10/07) (DYNA) CDS529

The teenage Rossini dips his toe in
operatic waters with this lively debut



Rossini's first
professional opera,
written for Venice's
Teatro San Moisè when
he was 18, is full of dash
and pizzazz. There have
been four recordings to
date, of which the best by some distance was a
1960s *echt*-Italian version with Renato Fasano
conducting I Virtuosi di Roma and an
impressive cast led by Renato Scotti (Delysé,
7/67 – nla). Since then we've had a ruinously
reverberant recording on Claves and a hard-
driven, indifferently sung and closely miked
Pesaro Festival performance on Dynamic.

This newest taping dates from the same
year (2006) as the Pesaro account but is
superior in almost every respect. It is
sprucely, at times wittily conducted by
Christopher Franklin, and there is a good cast
that includes a decent tenor as the romantic
lead and a pair of lively *buffo* basses as the
hard-headed north countryman Tobias Mill
and his rather warmer-hearted opposite
number, the Canadian businessman Slook, to
whom Mill attempts to sell his daughter. The

Lithuanian soprano Julija Samsonova sings
Fanny, the commodity in question, and sings
her rather well. It is she who has the score's
highlight, the joyous "Vorrei spiegarvi il
giubilo" – Joan Sutherland once recorded the
aria – whose cabaletta resurfaces in Act 1 of
Il barbiere di Siviglia in the duet "Dunque io
son". Samsonova is a little lacking in fleetness
in that cabaletta but she takes her chances
earlier on, not least in the aria's lyric section.

The *secco* recitatives are played with rather
more panache in the Pesaro staging but the
Wildbad production is lively enough. The
rapturous reception at the final curtain is
testament to that.

Richard Osborne

Strauss

Intermezzo (sung in English)

Elisabeth Söderström *sop* Christine
Marco Bakker *bar* Robert Storch
Elizabeth Gale *sop* Anna
Richard Allfrey *spkr* Franzl
Alexander Oliver *ten* Baron Lummer
Thomas Lawlor *bass-bar* Notary
Anthony Rolfe Johnson *ten* Stroh

Glyndebourne Festival Opera; London
Philharmonic Orchestra / Sir John Pritchard
Chandos (B) 2 CHAN3174 (150' • AAD • S/T)

Recorded live, July 13, 1974

Selected comparisons:

Sawallisch (1/89) (EMI) 749337-2

Kuhn (NVC) 51442 8857-2

Far from faultless but a revealing
and supple take on Strauss's comedy



A curio or a godsend?
The answer comes
down to two factors:
How one values this
set's star, Elisabeth
Söderström, and if
one's German can
keep up with Strauss's hyper-verbal opera.

Intermezzo has long been known as the
Strauss opera least likely to succeed with
non-German-speaking audiences. In the
age-old question of whether words or music
should dominate, words definitely have the
edge here as the composer, acting as his own
librettist, dramatised an already stormy
marriage driven to the brink by a love note
accidentally sent to the wrong conductor – and
intercepted by his wife. The opera's candour
was a source of embarrassment and sensation.
Only later was *Intermezzo* appreciated as a
dramaturgical extension of the *Ariadne auf
Naxos* prologue, employing a full range of text
declamation, even spoken word, but largely
avoiding fully fledged singing almost until the
final duet. Still, *Intermezzo*'s comic velocity
is such that one can assiduously follow the
libretto with the classic Wolfgang Sawallisch-
conducted Lucia Popp/Dietrich Fischer-
Dieskau recording and only catch 50 per cent
of what's there. The 2008 arrival of

Glyndebourne's handsome John Cox production on DVD, with the central role of Christine sung in Andrew Porter's English translation by Felicity Lott, addressed all the needs of English-speaking audiences. Besides singing the vocal lines with a fine-etched accuracy, Lott smartly accounted for the spaces Strauss left for non-singing stage action, which can be as subtle as significant glances while reading a newspaper – as opposed to the more obvious to-ing and fro-ing of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Theatrical tone is so delicate here: the bickering of the opening scene can seem a bit like Edward Albee's George and Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*. With stage director Cox, it's played more like aggressive banter, accounting for why, despite the volatility, they're a strong unit. As much as Christine rails about the trappings of fame, their public-figure status makes their home a crucial refuge, giving the marital crisis extra gravity.

This newly released 1974 live recording, also from Glyndebourne, might seem like less of the same. The LPO threatens to fall apart in some of the preludes and the casting isn't consistently good. Though *Intermezzo* acts like a chamber opera, the music requires a grand operatic manner in the final scene, and Marco Bakker (Robert Storch) wasn't up to the task that night. The tricky scene between Christine and her young son Franzl – she sings and he talks – barely comes off at all. But as a longtime Söderström admirer, I wouldn't be without this set. And perhaps one need not have such a pre-existing bias to feel the same.

The opera belongs to Christine – it's almost a monodrama with subsidiary characters – so that any given star's strengths loom larger than usual. And as fine as she is, Lott isn't the last word on the role, which fails to tap the best parts of her voice (her *legato*, for one). Söderström offers a heartier range of vocal colour and seems to inhabit the role in ways that make the comic aspects driven more by the character than by the situation. Not until hearing this recording did I realise that this opera is so much more than a comedy. At the end of Act 1 when Christine is convinced the marriage is over, Pritchard's handling of the orchestra shows how deftly the music conveys that gut-wrenching feeling when the most basic fabric of one's life is ripped to pieces.

David Patrick Stearns

Tchaikovsky

The Queen of Spades

Vladimir Atlantov *ten*..... Herman
Julia Varady *sop*..... Lisa
Elena Obraztsova *mez*..... Countess
Alexander Voroshilo *bar*..... Count Tomsy
Bodo Brinkmann *bar*..... Prince Yeletsky
Ludmila Shemchuk *cont*..... Pauline
Yoshihisa Yamaji *ten*..... Chekalinsky
Karl Helm *bass*..... Surin

Ulrich Röss *ten*..... Chaplitsky
Friedrich Lenz *ten*..... Major-Domo
Alfred Kuhn *bass*..... Narumov
Gudrun Wewezow *mez*..... Governess
Carmen Anhorn *sop*..... Masha
Chorus of Bavarian State Opera; Bavarian State Orchestra / Algis Zhuraitis

Orfeo 80 2 C811 1121 (135' • ADD • T/T)

Recorded live, November 24, 1984

Selected comparison:

Kirov Op, Gergiev (10/93) (PHIL) 438 141-2PH3

It's not a complete Queen of Spades
but it's worth hearing for its principals



It is not hard to understand what the audience at Munich's National Theatre had to cheer about on November 24, 1984. Whatever this

production of *The Queen of Spades* had to offer visually – photos in the booklet suggest a fairly handsome, traditional show, with historically accurate costumes and attractive backdrops of St Petersburg – the singing clearly carried the day.

Above all, the Bavarian State Opera presented its audiences with a central couple at the peak of their form. As the tragic Lisa, Julia Varady is at least the equal of any counterpart on rival recordings. Poised midway between a lyric and dramatic soprano, Varady was ideally suited at this point in her career to roles such as this, which call for beauty of tone but also the strength to ride a large orchestra. She's in radiant voice here, convincingly youthful and appealing at her first encounter with Herman, throwing caution to the wind as she goes to her death in the Neva. Vladimir Atlantov's Herman is a known quantity but it is good to hear again how fearless he could be onstage. With its baritone power, his voice is rarely beautiful, but even when the tone starts to sound forced, there is a grandiloquence about his portrayal here that can be thrilling.

Unfortunately the Munich production harks back to the bad old days when *The Queen of Spades* was regarded as an opera ripe for cutting. It is not only Algis Zhuraitis's urgent speeds that make him 30 minutes faster than Gergiev, as "The Faithful Shepherdesses" pastorate falls under his knife. Zhuraitis leads a not overly subtle performance, and the dryish theatre acoustic underlines the brass-heavy balance. The other Russian singers in the cast – Obraztsova's formidable Countess, Voroshilo's sturdy Tomsy and Shemchuk's dark Pauline – overshadow their German colleagues. This can hardly be a first choice when Gergiev's recording, complete in text and more wide-ranging in expression, offers such strong competition. But for Varady and Atlantov in full cry it is worth hearing. Richard Fairman

Vivaldi

Andromeda liberata – Sovvente il sole. **Arsilda, regina di Ponto** – Io sento in questo seno. Del goder la bella spene. Cara gioia. **Giustino** Sento in seno. Sorte, che m'invitasti... Ho nel petto un cor sì forte. Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Anastasio). **Teuzzone** – Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Zidiana). Transit actas. **La costanza trionfante** – Lascia almen che ti conseggi. **L'Atenaide** – Cor mio, che prigion sei. **L'Olimpiade** – Con questo ferro indegno. Gemo in punto e fremo. Sinfonia. **Orlando furioso** Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Ruggiero). Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Medoro). **Semiramide** – Con la face di Megera. Vincerà l'aspro mio fato. **Tieteburga** – La gloria del mio sangue; L'innocenza sfortunata. Juditha triumphans, RV644 – Agitata infido flatu **Orfeo 55 / Nathalie Stutzmann contr**
DG 476 4390GH (70' • DDD • T/D)


Stutzmann steps up to deliver an unprecedented Vivaldi recital disc



Although Nathalie Stutzmann has made distinguished contributions to Naïve's Vivaldi opera project and lent a memorable *Nisi Dominus* to Robert King's sacred music cycle, this is, I think, her first Vivaldi recital disc. It might also be the first by a contralto; for sure it is the first in which the singer is also the conductor of an orchestra they themselves have founded.

That is remarkable enough, though I hope Ms Stutzmann will forgive me for saying that it is not the most important thing here. Yes, her intelligent command of Orfeo 55 brings taut and vibrant results, but this we have lately come to expect from Vivaldi orchestras, whether directed by a violinist, a recorder player, a cellist or whatever. It is Stutzmann's matchless singing that makes this disc not only delicious to listen to, but also a valuable addition to the Vivaldi discography, highlighting as it does the composer's evident sympathy for the alto voice. This is demonstrated above all by the relative lack of outright virtuoso arias presented here, surely an acknowledgment that Vivaldi's genius is better revealed in his slow arias, so compelling in their magical stillness and haunting in their perfumed melody. Numbers like "Sovvente il sole" from *Andromeda liberata* must have been true showstoppers.

Stutzmann realises them all with a sombre beauty of tone that melts the heart and an emotional focus that commands the attention. With Vivaldi's adventurous instrumental palette also on show (there are obbligato turns for psaltery and mandolin) and every number driven by the man's uniquely febrile imagination, this is a must-have not just for Vivaldi fans but for anyone with a taste for Baroque vocal music performed at the highest level. Lindsay Kemp



Bow Brand

The unique sound of innovation

Harpists need strings that not only enable them to express themselves with subtle tones and shades, but also perform faultlessly time after time. Using craftsmanship, expertise and technology, Bow Brand has developed a range of high performance strings that are second to none in tone, consistency and longevity. From nylon and natural gut to tarnish resistant and silver plated bass wires, each of the strings in the extensive Bow Brand portfolio has been subjected to the very latest in string technology and hand finished by one of its team of production experts.

Bow Brand... the Harpists' Choice

Bow Brand

Highgate, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE30 1PT
freephone 0800 282355
sales@bowbrand.co.uk
www.bowbrand.co.uk

To order, visit www.harp.com

ROUND-UP

Metropolitan matinees

Mike Ashman delves into some live performances from Met seasons past

From 1947's *Roméo* to 1972's *Meistersinger*, we're in decidedly ancient time, not so much sound-wise (the remasterings are solid, sensible, unobtrusive) as style-wise in these gobbets of "live" (and noisy) opera-making taken direct from the Metropolitan's Saturday matinee radio broadcasts. Sony's choice of material mirrors the bullfight atmosphere that reigned throughout much of this time in New York: Stars' first entries, arias, duets, sustained high notes and ends of scene are loudly applauded; performing editions respect the score neither in terms of completeness or accuracy.

A performance of Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* (February 1, 1947) is grandly conceived and led (and cut) by Russian-English conductor Emil Cooper. Jussi Björling and Bidú Sayão are in fine, fearless but not subtle



voice as the lovers. His slightly iced Italianate tones balance well with her essentially light, young-sounding but carrying timbre. The duet has no small emotional impact and the final tomb scene would too if Sayão's mezza-voice sobbing weren't a bigger balance threat to her tenor than the old radio sound. None the less, this Gounod with Romantic guts can really thrill.

Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (December 16, 1950) is really only for masochistic devotees of stage camp. Lily Pons (Rosina) turns "Una voce poco fa" into a warm-up exercise of trills, decorations and attempts to hit an F. For her Act 2 singing lesson she brings an English version of "Ah, vous dirai-je maman" and interrupts it frequently with boring and unfunny scale practice. Her fellow 50-something Salvatore Baccaloni (Bartolo) prefers to talk rather than sing (even

in "A un dottore") or make noises through his gums. Even Giuseppe Valdengo (Figaro) - who tries hard to get his slow-moving voice round Rossini's quicker notes - cannot resist interpolating speech to Rosina and the Count. In the latter role, a young Giuseppe di Stefano sounds lovely but has little idea of the humour of role or piece. Ensemble goes frequently awry.

Erich Leinsdorf's performance of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (January 28, 1961) sounds under-rehearsed in the kind of detail for which this maestro was famous - although those who stray from his swift baton and sudden tempo changes are run over without mercy. Yet Leinsdorf's style and pacing, and the perky but never boring Susanna of Roberta Peters, compensate for the top-heavy casting of Figaro (Cesare Siepi) and the Count (Kim Borg), large-ish orchestra and poorly recorded, minimal continuo.

The young Dutch-American conductor Thomas Schippers has a natural showman's feel for the tempo and colour of Puccini's *La bohème* (February 15, 1958). His handling of Musetta's "Quando m'en vo" as a hit musical song is as effective as the icy tentacles he conjures up to accompany Licia Albanese's "Donde lieta usci". Albanese can stray in pitch but has weight and style (heart-tearing in Act 4's "Sono andati?") and does not sound too old for her Rodolfo, Carlo Bergonzi - at the first peak of his form and already



inflecting "O soave fanciulla" like a master. A *Tosca* (April 2, 1962) is less gripping. Kurt Adler accompanies (and follows) rather than leads; musico-dramatic peaks like the murder of Scarpia have little through-drive. Franco Corelli sounds out of sorts and nervous, interested



Di Stefano, Pons and Valdengo in the Met's 1950 *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

only in delivering the high notes (the second "Vittoria" lasts long enough to provoke applause to get him to end it), while Cornell MacNeil sounds a reluctant baddie (compare his almost polite "È forza che s'adempia la legge" with Gobbi's or Raimondi's). But Leontyne Price's voice-placing and tone carry all before them, not least the words. "Vissi d'arte", true plea rather than abstract rumination, deservedly stops the show.

Thomas Schippers's wiry and illuminating Wagner *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (January 15, 1972) mixes cast from Europe and America. A strong, uncommonly free and relaxed Walther from James King, Pilar Lorengar's Eva and Loren Driscoll's David take the honours. Theo Adam's worthy and humane Sachs evidently would have preferred some of his part taken slower. There are horrid cuts (one in Sachs's final address a throwback to pre-war Met practice), a certain lack of chorus rehearsal and sheer vocal weight and much

enthusiasm from the comprimario masters.

Die Walküre (February 24, 1968) regales us with Leonie Rysanek and Jon Vickers as the Walsungs, Birgit Nilsson as Brünnhilde and Thomas Stewart as Wotan.

This vocal strength is not matched by Croatian conductor Berislav Klobučar, already by this time a Bayreuth regular - fluent, quite light music-making.

without much individual face. The orchestra play supremely for Karl Böhm in a *Fidelio* (February 13, 1960), overall the most recommendable of this latest Sony crop. Jon Vickers's Florestan is a purer, less mannered reading than for Karajan or Klemperer, while Birgit Nilsson, ferocious of top notes and occasionally unsteady of pitch, gives a concentrated and genuinely emotional Leonore. 🎧

Gounod *Roméo et Juliette* Cooper
Sony © 2 88697 80465-2

Rossini *Il barbiere di Siviglia* Erede
© 2 88697 80462-2

Mozart *Le nozze di Figaro* Leinsdorf
© 3 88697 85310-2

Puccini *La bohème* Schippers
© 2 88697 80463-2

Puccini *Tosca* Adler
© 2 88697 80468-2

Wagner *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* Schippers
© 3 88697 85304-2

Wagner *Die Walküre* Klobučar
© 3 88697 85308-2

Beethoven *Fidelio* Böhm
© 2 88697 85309-2

DVD & Blu-ray

Glyndebourne's Billy Budd • Munch revisited • Domingo as the Doge

Bach • Brahms • Mozart

Bach Double Concerto, BWV1043^a

Brahms Violin Concerto, Op 77^b

Mozart Sinfonia concertante, K364^c

David Oistrakh ^aviola ^bIgor Oistrakh ^{vi}

^aEnglish Chamber Orchestra / Colin Davis;

^bMoscow Philharmonic Orchestra /

^cYehudi Menuhin; ^dKyrill Kondrashin

ICA Classics ©  ICAD5012 (94' • NTSC • 4:3 •

LPCM mono • 0 • N). Recorded live at the Royal Albert

Hall, London, ^aSeptember 23, 1962, ^bOctober 1, 1963;

Royal Festival Hall, London, ^cSeptember 24, 1963

Mozart – selected comparison:

Oistrakh, Menuhin (EMI) 49049-9

Oistrakh and son caught live in

London on both sides of the Thames



I am unclear why ICA Classics say these performances are released on DVD “for the first time.” The Mozart has been nestling in my collection for the past eight years on EMI. The differences, however, are

in the striking visual improvement of its latest incarnation, the inclusion of the soloists’ and conductor’s entry, and the tuning process.

The other two works do indeed appear to be newcomers. The Bach opens proceedings as it does for EMI. Then it was Menuhin and David Oistrakh as soloists conducted by the avuncular Pierre Capdevielle; ICA has the two Oistrakhs conducted by Colin Davis. Leaving aside the rosy picture quality of the earlier one, the two performances make for fascinating comparison. For me, it is both Oistrakhs who provide the more richly rewarding experience. While Menuhin’s pronounced vibrato is a stylistic mismatch with Oistrakh *père*, Igor’s blends with a magical serenity verging on perfection. Only a horrendous tape wobble at 11’53” in the first movement momentarily disrupts this memorable broadcast.

The Mozart, too, is wonderfully played. The Oistrakhs’ performance of it three days earlier in Manchester under Kondrashin was apparently only the second time in 40 years that David had played the viola in public. On the podium, Menuhin cuts a gauche and inexperienced figure, bringing off phrase endings with minimal, almost casual, gestures. Somehow it works. Where the EMI disc has

the Brahms Double (David Oistrakh and Rostropovich) conducted by Kondrashin in the Albert Hall, ICA has the Violin Concerto with Kondrashin in the Festival Hall, captured just nine days before the Mozart. Conductor and soloist had played the work many times before – and it shows (what a persuasive figure Kondrashin presents compared to Menuhin as he presides over a masterclass in concerto accompaniment!). Theirs is surely among the most satisfying accounts of this great concerto, one to return to repeatedly with or without the visual element. **Jeremy Nicholas**

Fauré • Franck • Wagner


Fauré Pelléas et Mélisande – Suite^a **Franck**

Symphony^b **Wagner** Die Meistersinger von

Nürnberg – Prelude, Act 3; Dance of the

Apprentices; Procession of the Mastersingers^c

Boston Symphony Orchestra / Charles Munch

ICA Classics ©  ICAD5015

(70' • NTSC • 4:3 • LPCM mono • 0 • N)

Recorded live at the Sanders Theatre, Harvard


University, ^aApril 7, 1959, ^bMarch 8, 1960, ^cMarch 14, 1961

Debussy • Ravel

Debussy Ibéria^a. La mer^b

Ravel Ma Mère l'Oye – Suite^c

Boston Symphony Orchestra / Charles Munch

ICA Classics ©  ICAD5014

(68' • NTSC • 4:3 • LPCM mono • 0 • N)

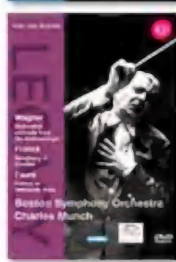
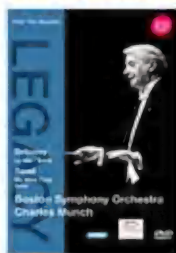
Recorded live at the Sanders Theatre, Harvard

University, ^aFebruary 4, 1958, ^bOctober 28, 1958,

^cOctober 31, 1961

Rescued from a TV archive, Munch

and his Bostonians live at Harvard



These are excerpts from the more than 150 live concerts broadcast by Boston’s public television station WGBH between 1955 and 1979. Legal issues have meant that most of the more than 100 transmissions that survive have never been seen since the day they went out on air. The mild-mannered Munch, who took over the reins of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1948 from the autocratic Koussevitzky, inherited what was arguably the

finest orchestra in the world at that time. A more collegial figure, always mindful of his experience as an orchestral violinist, he is an unshowy but very watchable figure on the podium, his face often wreathed in a beatific smile, his arms, as Richard Dyer observes in his amiable booklet, flung wide “as if to embrace the music...*souplesse* for him is a greater virtue than precision”.

Of the three items on ICAD5015, orchestral excerpts from Act 3 of *Die Meistersinger* come first (Munch preferred this sequence of the Prelude, Dance of the Apprentices and Procession of the Mastersingers to the more popular Overture). Munch was noted for his performances of French music and the next item, from a year later (1961), is treasure indeed: Franck’s D minor Symphony, searing, warm-blooded and slightly brisker than Monteux’s benchmark recording made the same year with the Chicago Symphony. But while the visual element of the transmission is no more or less lacklustre than other broadcasts of the period (overhead shots are much favoured), the recorded sound as captured in Harvard University’s Sanders Theatre and a strident brass section that rides roughshod over the strings make for less than ideal listening.

More French music completes the DVD – Fauré’s concert suite from the incidental music to *Pelléas et Mélisande* – but it is Ravel’s *Mother Goose Suite* (this Munch conducts with the score) and particularly Debussy’s *Ibéria* and *La mer* on ICAD5014 that are especially valuable. *La mer* was very much the Boston ensemble’s property (they gave the American premiere in 1907), while sitting among Munch’s players are Louis Speyer (cor anglais) and Rene Voisin (trumpet), both of whom had played in the world premiere of *The Rite of Spring*. In addition there are frequent shots of Doriot Dwyer (flute), then the only female section principal in any major American orchestra, appointed by Munch in 1952 (she retired in 1990). The picture quality deteriorates slightly as the vivid performance progresses, one which is a compliment to, but not a replacement for, Munch’s famous 1956 RCA recording.

Jeremy Nicholas


Dvořák • Shostakovich • Weber • JS Bach

JS Bach Solo Violin Sonata No 1, BWV1001 – Presto^a **Dvořák** Symphony No 8, Op 88^b.

Slavonic Dance, Op 72 No 7^b **Shostakovich**

Violin Concerto No 1, Op 99^cWeber Oberon – Overture^b^aHilary Hahn *vn* ^bBerlin Philharmonic
Orchestra / Mariss Jansons

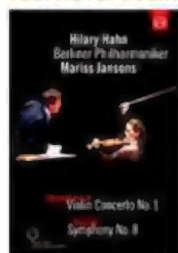
Video director Shoichi Nishikawa

EuroArts (P)  205 0448 (99) • NTSC • 16:9 •

PCM stereo & DTS 5.1 • 0)

Recorded live at Suntory Hall, Tokyo,

November 26, 2000

**An exceptional Eighth but the
rest never seems to catch fire**

As the opening of Dvořák's Eighth is moulded and caressed into life by Mariss Jansons, more gently and sensually than on his studio recording (EMI), it quickly becomes apparent how distant we are from

the plain-speaking affection of a native account by Talich or Ančerl. The sound and approach is quite similar to that taken by Rattle and the orchestra when they toured the Seventh a few years ago – a performance widely disliked at the time for the want of spontaneity and “knowing veneer of sophistication” that antagonised Andrew Achenbach when he reviewed the same team's recording of tone-poems (EMI, 9/05). For myself, I'm more than happy to be reminded of the mutual admiration between Brahms and Dvořák in the ambivalent melancholy of the third movement's Trio, taken slowly and with rich *portamento*; to be gripped by the tightly wound, emphatic development of the first movement; to be disconcerted by the episodes of both slow movement and finale when they're presented with operatically charged tension and abrupt transitions. This is an exceptional account.

The remainder of the concert is less demanding of a second or third audition. The Weber is fun, as is the *Slavonic Dance* encore, but the concerto partnership, so propitious on paper, never catches light. Both the Weber and Shostakovich lack a dark side. The cor anglais and basses set the Passacaglia on its grave course with all the eloquence at their command – and this is the Berlin Philharmonic – but in a performance that feels faster than the clock shows, Hahn rides the line rather than shaping it. It's admirable that she never compromises what Rob Cowan called her “sweetness-and-steel tone”, not even in the cadenza, but the finale brings little catharsis, for all its velocity – the same is true of the relationship between *Scherzo* and opening Nocturne – because few secrets, intimate or alarming, had been hitherto confided. She digs deeper into the piece on CD (Sony, 4/03). Her own encore, the Presto from Bach's G minor Solo Sonata, doesn't escape the air of impressive command but faceless despatch. When record companies do





Britten

Billy Budd

Jacques Imbrailo *bar* Billy Budd
John Mark Ainsley *ten* Captain Vere
Phillip Ens *bass* John Claggart
Iain Paterson *bass-bar* Mr Redburn
Matthew Rose *bass* Mr Flint
Darren Jeffery *bass-bar* Lt Ratcliffe
Alasdair Elliott *ten* Red Whiskers
John Moore *baritone* Donald
Jeremy White *bass* Dansker
Ben Johnson *ten* Novice
Colin Judson *ten* Squeak
Richard Mosley-Evans *bar* Bosun
Michael Wallace *bar* First Mate
John-Owen Miley-Read *bar* Second Mate
Peter Gijbetsen *ten* Maintop
Alexander Robin Baker *bar* Novice's Friend
Toby Girling *bar* Arthur Jones
Glyndebourne Chorus; London Philharmonic
Orchestra / Sir Mark Elder

Stage director Michael Grandage

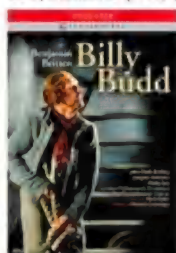
Video director François Roussillon

Opus Arte (P)  0A1051D; (P)  0ABD7086D
(3h 20' • NTSC • 16:9 • 1080i • LPCM stereo and DTS
5.1 • 0 • S/N/s). Recorded live, June 8 & 11, 2010

Selected comparisons:

ENO, Atherton (7/04) (ARTH) 100 278

LSO, Mackerras (9/08) (DECC) 074 3256DH



Almost two decades after Humphrey Carpenter's controversial biography of Britten, opera directors have woken up to some of its revelations. Productions such as Richard Jones's *Billy Budd* set in a boys' naval college and ENO's recent *A Midsummer Night's Dream* have put forward radical reinterpretations.

By their side, Glyndebourne's *Billy Budd* is traditional to a fault. Michael Grandage is true to both the period and the place – the HMS *Indomitable* during the Napoleonic Wars – and, more importantly, to the atmosphere and characters as Britten imagined them. Further than that, though, he does not venture: even traditional productions can do more to reveal the opera's undercurrents, whether it is the sexual tensions, the Christian symbolism or the downfall of an archetypal hero redolent of a Greek tragedy.

On DVD, as in the theatre, Grandage's honest faithfulness feels too mild. Still, the interior of HMS *Indomitable* looks mightily impressive and the stage is stunningly lit. Add to this some highly effective filming – how subtly, for example, the camera picks out Billy's worried expression as he watches the Novice suffering – and you have a DVD of high quality.

In the title-role, Jacques Imbrailo fields just the right youthful lyric baritone and sings Billy's solo below decks beautifully. John Mark Ainsley gets to the heart of Captain Vere, every close-up showing an artist immersed in his role, and Phillip Ens sings gravely as a Claggart who seems sadly resigned to his lot, rather than an active force of destruction. There are fine contributions from Matthew Rose as Mr Flint, Ben Johnson as the Novice and Iain Paterson as Mr Redburn but all are more than adequate. With the LPO on top form, Mark Elder conducts a performance of impeccable class which never takes the drama to the edge, rather like the production as a whole. ENO's *Billy Budd* from the 1980s offers strong competition – and do not forget Decca's 1970 film, tautly conducted by Mackerras. **Richard Fairman**



11 Broad Street, Bath, BA1 5LJ
Tel: 01225 464766 Fax: 01225 482275

E-mail: Bathcds@btinternet.com Website: www.bathcds.btinternet.co.uk

Shop & mail order - Open 9.00 to 5.30 Mon to Sat

CDs *STILL* SENT POST FREE IN UK!

GRAMOPHONE DISC OF THE MONTH

BEETHOVEN: Fidelio; Kaufmann/Stemme/Lucerne Festival Orch/Abbado
Decca 478 2251 (2 CDs).....£19.99

EDITOR'S CHOICE

BOUGHTON: The Queen of Cornwall; Soloists/New London Orch/Corp
Dutton 2CDLX 7256 (2 CDs).....£15.99
BYRD: Complete Consort Music; Phantasm
Linn CKD 372.....£12.99
"Casals Encores"; Gerhardt/Licad
Hyperion CDA 67831.....£12.99
CAVALLI: Artemisia; Soloists/La Venciana/Cavina
Glossa GCD 9209187 (3 CDs).....£27.99
CHAUSSON: Concert/MATHIEU: Trio/Quintet; Qt Alcan/etc
Analekta AN 29286.....£12.99

LISZT: Ballade 2/Funerallics/etc; Lise de la Salle
Naïve V5267.....£12.99
"O Guiding Light - the Spanish Mystics" The Sixteen/Christophers
Coro 16090.....£12.99
RACHMANINOV: Piano Concertos 1 & 4/etc; Trpceski/RLPO/Petrenko
Avie AV 2191.....£12.99
ROSA: Orchestral Works Vol 2 (Cello Concerto/etc); Soloists/BBC Phil/Gamba
Chandos CHAN 10674.....£12.99
DVD - MAHLER: Symphony 9; Staatskapelle Berlin/Barenboim
C Major 703 708.....£19.99

BATH COMPACT DISCS SUMMER SALE!!!

Bath Compact Discs are having a Summer Sale, from the 20th August to the 10th September.
Hundreds of Classical CDs reduced to crazy prices! Shop callers only.

OUR PICK OF THE MONTH'S NEW RELEASES

ALWYN: Concerto Grossi 2 & 3/etc; RLPO/Lloyd-Jones
Naxos 857 0145.....£5.99
BARBER: Complete Piano Music; McCawley
Somm CD 0108.....£9.99
BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonatas 3 & 21/etc; Alice Sara Ott
DG 477 9291.....£12.99
BOCCHERINI: La Musica Notturna della Strade di Madrid; Qt Casals
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902092.....£12.99
BRUCH: Violin Concerto 1 (+ Wieniawski/Bull); Siem/LSO/Gourlay
Warner 2564 666612.....£12.99
CHOPIN: Complete Waltzes; Stephen Hough
Hyperion CDA 67849.....£12.99
COUPERIN: Complete Keyboard Works; Egarr
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907511/2 (4 CDs).....£25.99
DEBUSSY: La Mer/RAVEL: La Valse/etc; Seoul SO/Chung
DG 476 4498.....£12.99
DONIZETTI: Lucia di Lammermoor; Dessay/Beczala/Gergiev
Mariinsky MAR 0512 (2 SACDs).....£19.99
Dudamel conducts the Gothenburg SO (Bruckner 9, Sibelius 2, Nielsen 5 & 6)
DG 477 9449 (3 CDs).....£21.99
ELGAR: Organ Works; Richard Quinney (Westminster Abbey)
Signum SIGCD 266.....£12.99
HINDEMITH: Orchestral Works; Sao Paulo SO/Neschling
BIS SACD 1730.....£12.99
HOLBROOKE: Violin Sonatas/Horn Trio; Peacock/Stevenson/Smith
Naxos 857 2649.....£5.99
LASSUS: Prophetiae Sibyllarum/etc; Brabant Ensemble/Rice
Hyperion CDA 67887.....£12.99

MENDELSSOHN: Double Concerto/etc; Bezuidenhout/von der Goltz
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902082.....£12.99
MOZART: Complete Piano Sonatas (1970s recordings); Maria Joao Pires
Brilliant 94271 (5 CDs).....£15.99
RIHM: Lichtes Spiel/CURRAN: Time Machines; Mutter/etc
DG 477 9359.....£12.99
"Romantic Arias"; Nino Machaidze
Sony 88697 847042.....£12.99
SAINT-SAENS: Organ Music Vol 2; Andrew-John Smith
Hyperion CDA 67815.....£12.99
SCHÖENBERG: Chamber Sym/Accompanying Music to a Film/
BRAHMS (orch Schoenberg); Piano Qt 1; BPO/Rattle
EMI 457 8152.....£10.99
"Shakespeare - Come Again, Sweet Love" (Purcell/Dowland/Johnson/etc);
Daniel Taylor/Kirkby/Chance/etc/Theatre of Early Music
Sony 88697 727222.....£12.99
"Una Tonadilla Nueva!" (Baroque Music from Ecuador); Ens Villancico
CPO 777 5682.....£10.99
VICTORIA: Sacred Works; Ensemble Plus Ultra/Noone
Archiv 477 9747 (10 CDs).....£39.99
VIVALDI: Arias; Stutzmann/Orfeo 55
DG 476 4390.....£13.99
VIVALDI: Violin Concertos Op 6; L'Arte dell'Arco/Guglielmo
Brilliant 94245.....£5.99
WAGNER: Parsifal; Soloists/Netherlands RPO/van Zweden
Challenge Classics CC72519 (4 SACDs + bonus DVD).....£44.99
WEBER: Overtures; Tapiola Sinfonietta/Kantarow
BIS SACD 1760.....£12.99

NEW DVDS

AUBER: Manon Lescaut; Vidal/Gabriel/Massis/Jordan
Disque Dom DVDDOM 11015.....£17.99
BIZET: Djamilah; Gautrot/Guez/Nouera/Jordan
Disque Dom DVDDOM 11005.....£17.99
De FALLA: Nights in the Gardens of Spain/etc; BPO/Rattle (2010)
Euroarts 205 8808.....£24.99
(Also available on Blu-Ray, 205 8884, £29.99)
JANACEK: Jenufa; Ejsing/Dvorsky/Bolton (Madrid 2009)
Opus Arte OA 1055D.....£24.99
(Also available on Blu-Ray, 7089D, £29.99)

MILHAUD: Christophe Colomb; Naouri/Hermon/Saint-Palais/Jordan
Disque Dom DVDDOM 11014.....£17.99
"Salzburg Opening Concert 2010" (Beethoven/Boulez/etc); VPO/Barenboim
C Major 706 808.....£19.99
(Also available on Blu-Ray, 706 904, £29.99)
TURNAGE: Anna Nicole; Westbrook/Oke/Finley/Pappano (ROH 2011)
Opus Arte OA 1054D.....£24.99
(Also available on Blu-Ray, OABD 7088D, £29.99)
"Wagner" (Tony Palmer's film); Burton/Oliveir/Gielgud/Redgrave/etc
Tony Palmer TPDVD 157 (3 DVDs).....£25.99

Don't forget this is only a fraction of our stock, if there is anything else you would like please ask.

A full list of available classical DVD and Blu-Ray titles is available on request
(Special offer prices valid until the end of September 2011 or while stocks last)

CDs SENT POST FREE IN UK

POSTAGE RATES FOR OVERSEAS CUSTOMERS; (Deduct British VAT for non-EU countries - divide list price by 1.2 = Nett Price)

For overseas customers who wish to use a credit/debit card we charge the exact postage, which varies depending on weight. If you would prefer to send a sterling cheque,
the following rates apply: Europe: £1.50, plus 50p for each additional disc. Rest of the World: £2.00, plus £1.00 for each additional disc.

F&OE

more with filmed concerts than just throwing the lot on a DVD, such anomalies – intrinsic to the concert-going experience – may recede. I'm not holding my breath.

Peter Quantrill

Mahler

Symphony No 9

Staatskapelle Berlin / Daniel Barenboim

Video director Andreas Morell

C Major (P) DVD 703708 (101' • NTSC • 16:9 •

PCM stereo & DTS 5.1 • 0)

Recorded live at the Philharmonie, Berlin,

April 5, 2009

Bonus feature: 'The Mahler Project' – Daniel Barenboim and Pierre Boulez working on the symphonies of Gustav Mahler

Barenboim's Mahler Ninth instantly comes up against Abbado's recent DVD



"We don't want to enter a 'friendly competition'; that would be truly stupid," says Pierre Boulez in the bonus documentary explaining the Mahler Project, his tag-team symphonic cycle with conductor Daniel

Barenboim and the Staatskapelle Berlin. That may be; but for those of us with limited funds or shelf space, this DVD is indeed in competition, not least with Claudio Abbado's account with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, which was released on DVD only a few weeks previously (Accentus, 6/11).

Barenboim and Mahler have not always seemed a natural fit but the relationship has obviously grown closer over the years. Barenboim's description of balancing the initial shock of discovery with knowledge internalised from later study is not only palpable here in performance but places his approach in stark relief against Abbado's. Where Abbado often pores over every note, Barenboim concerns himself with the phrase. Mahlerians with a stopwatch fetish will notice some dramatic differences in tempo, and yet Barenboim's performance seems not only unrushed but precisely long enough. Abbado seems to wallow in impending death; Barenboim looks past the pathos and finds life. Shelf space notwithstanding, I'm not sure why we need to chose only one. The days are long gone since I thought Bernstein's account was enough.

The camerawork here is strong, bringing the viewer into the most interesting sections of the orchestra at any given moment and doing so in a particularly musical fashion. For Barenboim and Boulez, the Mahler Project was as much about developing a relationship with a particular orchestra as it was with the composer; short of actually being with them in the concert hall, this is probably the best way to experience the results. **Ken Smith**

Verdi

Simon Boccanegra

Plácido Domingo *bar* Simon Boccanegra

Adrienne Pieczonka *sop* Amelia

Marcello Giordani *ten* Gabriele

James Morris *bass* Fiesco

Stephen Gaertner *bass* Paolo

Richard Bernstein *bar* Pietro

Adam Laurence Herskowitz *ten* A Captain

Joyce El-Khoury *mez* Maid

Metropolitan Opera and Chorus / James Levine

Stage director Peter McClintock

Video director Barbara Willis Sweete

Sony Classical (M) (2) DVD 88697 80664-9

(149' • NTSC • 16:9 • PCM stereo & DTS 5.1 • 0)

Recorded live, February 6, 2010

Selected comparison:

Royal Opera, Pappano (2/11) (EMI) 917825-9

Domingo's second DVD outing as the doomed Doge



Here is the second recording within six months of Plácido Domingo in the title-role of *Simon Boccanegra*, his first onstage operatic baritone role. The Metropolitan Opera's DVD is everything one would expect of it. In Giancarlo del Monaco's unrepentantly traditional production, that means we get Verdi's opera as grand costume drama, its sets including a rambling Grimaldi country estate and a palatial Council Chamber in the Doge's Palace. Those with an aversion to the old-fashioned picturesque might find it fusty but it is handsomely executed and beautifully filmed.

It takes an artist of rare stature to measure up against a staging as big as this. Happily, Domingo is just that. He brings gravitas to the heart-rending recognition scene with his daughter and bestrides the Council Chamber with conviction. It is just a shame that he is not in his best voice. There are intermittent signs of vocal infirmity and it is ironic that, as a tenor, he should find a baritone's Fs and Gs on the high side. James Morris starts in wobbly form as Fiesco and still sounds gruff at the end. A troublesome vibrato aside, Adrienne Pieczonka's soprano is nicely lyric and warm but has a hearty quality that is difficult to square with the vulnerable Amelia. Marcello Giordani as Gabriele Adorno sounds worn. It is left to Levine and the splendid orchestra to give the music its opulence.

Visually, this luxurious production trumps the competition. In all other respects the Royal Opera DVD, with Domingo in better voice, is preferable. Poplavskaya and Calleja make a fresh-voiced pair of lovers and Pappano is also the more animated of the conductors. Lucky the purchaser who has a choice of the two. **Richard Fairman**

'Nobel Prize Concert 2010'

Beethoven Overture, Leonore No 3, Op 72b

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, Op 35*

Sibelius Symphony No 5, Op 82

*Joshua Bell *vn* Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra / Sakari Oramo

Video director Michael Beyer

Accentus Music (P) DVD ACC20215; (P) ACC10215

(91' • NTSC • 1080i • 16:9 • PCM stereo, DTS 5.1 &

DTS-HD MA • 0). Includes bonus interviews with

Joshua Bell, Sakari Oramo, Mario Vargas Llosa

A notable concert event, though the presentation has little of the gala about it



The Nobel Prize Concert is now a traditional element of the modern Award celebrations, given on December 8 each year, by chance also Sibelius's birthday. Last year marked his 145th anniversary as well as the 95th of the

Fifth Symphony's premiere (in its original guise), though the programming of the final version was apparently entirely coincidental. Sakari Oramo elicits a decent performance from the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, building the tension very capably in the opening *Tempo molto moderato* and moving the *Andante mosso, quasi allegretto* along with a nice judgment, the brass snarling with real menace in their brief outburst. As usual, the concluding *Allegro molto* follows with barely a second's pause (I wish conductors would give the music more room to breathe here) generating much excitement if not quite the incandescence Sibelius surely wanted.

For many the main event here is Joshua Bell who turns in a fine account of the Tchaikovsky Concerto, ably supported by Oramo – credit where credit is due, a fine orchestral accompanist. In the expansive opening *Allegro moderato*, both relish the inherent drama and passion as well as its winning lyrical impulse. The Canzonetta is sweetly delivered and the concluding *Allegro vivacissimo* dances along pleasingly. The resultant ovation was well deserved, as was that for Beethoven's *Leonore* No 3, conducted from memory by Oramo and delivered with sincere relish by the players.

It is curious, given the concert's high profile, that there is a want of atmosphere in the resulting video presentation. Not so much Swedish reserve as the video direction being less inspired than the goings-on onstage, with some rather foursquare and unimaginative camerawork, but do look out for the wonderfully expressive principal bassoonist. As a record of a notable event it does feel flat. The sound is not, however, so listen and enjoy. Of the bonus interviews, that with Nobel Laureate Mario Vargas Llosa is the pick. **Guy Rickards**

Rob Cowan's monthly survey of reissues and archive recordings

Master documents new to CD

Glenn Gould's unreleased live material • The remarkable, unsung Willem van Otterloo

I've always thought of **Glenn Gould** as the James Dean of the piano. Both men were handsome, wilful and driven on singular courses that would reverberate throughout their respective performing worlds. Of course fate decreed that Dean's career would stop dead, literally, as the generation he most influenced was truly coming of age. Gould also burned himself into the consciousness of young audiences and, although 50 is certainly no age to die, at least as a "work in progress" he was able to consolidate and develop his early promise.

Sony's Gould studio legacy is provocative and far-reaching but valuable off-the-air live material (some of it recorded in concert) provides essential supplementary listening, especially when you consider that Gould soon abandoned public performing. West Hill Radio Archives' "Glenn Gould in Concert 1951-1960" offers radically different viewpoints of works that are currently available on disc from Gould, as well as certain pieces that we don't have at all. Many selections are first-ever releases and although Beethoven's *Ghost* Piano Trio and Third Cello Sonata (Op 69) with violinist Oscar Shumsky and cellist Leonard Rose aren't "new" in that sense, it's good to have these nimble, warmly expressed performances reissued. This is Gould on good behaviour; likewise in Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto (Buffalo Philharmonic under Josef Krips, with a rather hit-or-miss timpanist) and Brahms's First Concerto.

We already have both works from Gould featuring more illustrious maestros, the Beethoven under Stokowski – an eccentrically ironed-out performance – the Brahms recorded live under Bernstein in a performance that was so leisurely and linear that the conductor felt prompted to offer his audience a good-natured explanation of what they were about to experience. Here, however, Gould cuts the fuss and increases the voltage, though the sound for the (1959) Brahms is disappointingly constricted. Bernstein can be heard in the current context brooding over the orchestral accompaniment to the one Mozart piano concerto that Gould performed, K491 in C minor, a striking combination of Beethovenian bullishness (Bernstein) and crystalline elegance (Gould).

Paul Paray and the Detroit Symphony were on hand for comparatively broadly paced accounts of Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto, a work rated very highly by Gould and which he plays with enormous conviction, and Bach's Fifth *Brandenburg Concerto*, where the violinist is Toscanini's onetime concertmaster Misha Mishakoff. The flautist, another brilliant Detroit section leader, is Albert Tipton. As to the remainder of the set, Schoenberg's Piano Concerto with the Cleveland Orchestra under Louis Lane sounds as natural as Brahms (Schoenberg I'm sure would have been delighted). A disc of music by Schoenberg, Webern and Krenek, which includes Schoenberg's 15 verses from *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* with mezzo-soprano Kerstin Meyer – a peach of a performance, haunting and sensitive – is in my view worth the price of a set that is already on offer as "six CDs priced as four". As to Gould the seasoned

virtuoso, just listen to the lissom 19-year-old having a whale of a time with Weber's *Konzertstück* in F minor and, for a Beethoven-player with exceptional powers of persuasion, a 1957 performance of the great E major Sonata, Op 109. Like much else in the set, you may either agree or disagree with the interpretation but you're unlikely to be bored or under-stimulated.

Likewise for much of Challenge Classics' second collection of recordings by the remarkably good (and sadly unsung) Dutch conductor **Willem van Otterloo**, which showcases various Philips recordings that until now have enjoyed only limited currency, if that. The principal orchestra involved is the Hague Philharmonic but we also hear from the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Symphony and the Royal Concertgebouw (a gripping programme consisting of Franck's D minor Symphony and tone-poem *Les Éolides*).

The set opens with a fiery, previously unreleased stereo recording of the Overture from Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*, then proceeds through the three standard dances, which are effectively segued one to the other. Van Otterloo's Beethoven respects the nature of each single work, his Fifth Symphony solid and powerful, his *Pastoral* more transparent in texture (and with a terrific "storm"). Pianist Cor de Groot will likely prove a modest revelation for those who have never heard him, whether in a commanding rendition of Beethoven's Third Concerto or, more particularly, in notably romantic accounts of the first two Rachmaninov concertos, both of which exhibit impressive technical prowess and watertight ensemble between piano and orchestra.

The Hague Philharmonic is joined by the Hague Chamber Choir for a performance of Franck's *Psyché* that, in interpretative terms, could serve as a benchmark, and van Otterloo drives the first movement of Saint-Saëns's *Organ* Symphony (Feike Asma is the organ soloist) with uncompromising abandon. Wagner is represented by a loving account of the *Siegfried Idyll* (the one recording with the Berlin Phil), and Bruckner by a compelling performance of the Seventh Symphony, with a dramatic broadening for the coda of the first movement and no cymbal clash for the climax of the second. Weber's Second Symphony is included; so are Schubert's Fifth (the highlight there is the slow movement) and *Rosamunde* Overture, Weber's *Freischütz*, Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Brahms's *Academic Festival* overtures, Beethoven's two violin Romances (with Theo Olof and Herman Krebbers) and a sequence of what Beecham would have called "lollipops" – Berlioz's *Rákóczi* March, Meyerbeer's *Coronation* March, Grieg's *Elegiac Melodies* and the March from Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*.

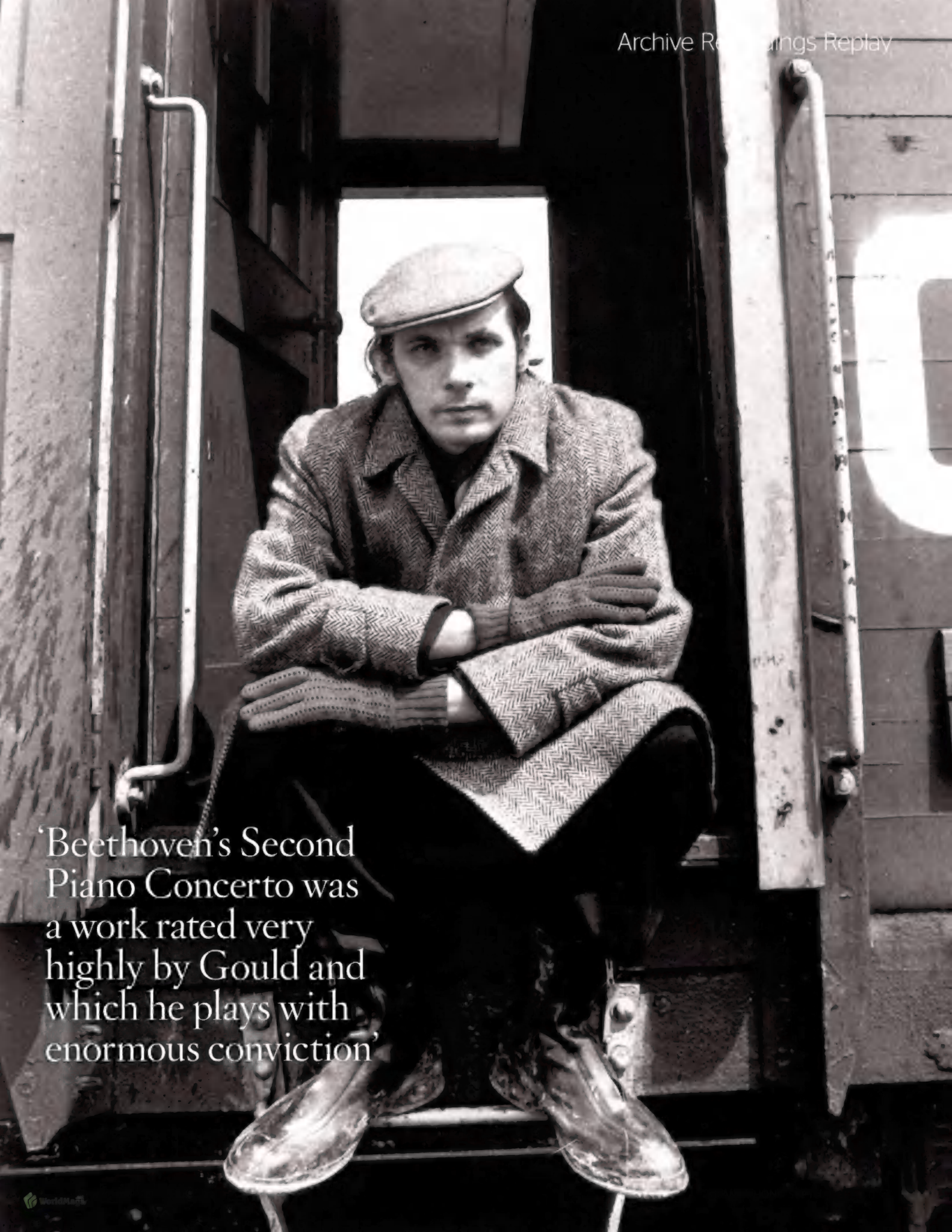
No one could claim a surface "wow" factor for these performances. Instead, what we have is something more durable – integrity, musicality, impeccable musical judgement and the sort of spontaneous orchestral playing that you would normally only expect from a live concert.

THE RECORDINGS



Various Cpsrs In Concert 1951-1960 **Gould**
West Hill Radio Archive (B) (C) WHRA6038

Various Cpsrs The Original Recordings 1951-1966
Van Otterloo
Challenge Classics (B) (Z) CC72383



'Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto was a work rated very highly by Gould and which he plays with enormous conviction'

signum
CLASSICS

New Releases from signumCLASSICS

SIGCD267



Hubert Parry Songs of Farewell

Choral Music by Parry, Taverer, Sullivan, Holst, Harris, Rodney Bennett, Howells, Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

Tenebrae
Nigel Short conductor

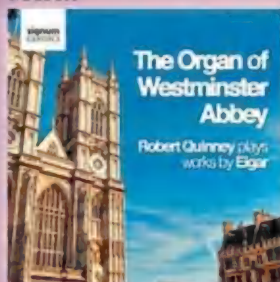
SIGCD211



LCO LIVE
Ravel Le Tombeau de Couperin
Fauré Pavane Op.50
Poulenc Piano Concerto
Ibert Divertissement

London Chamber Orchestra
Pascal Rogé piano
Christopher Warren-Green conductor

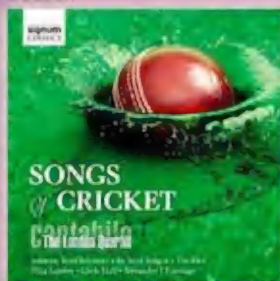
SIGCD266



The Organ of Westminster Abbey

Robert Quinney plays
works by **Edward Elgar**

SIGCD217



Songs of Cricket

Cantabile — The London Quartet

With guest performances from:
Richard Stilgoe
Tim Rice
Eliza Lumley
Rory Bremner

Available from all good retailers and online at
WWW.SIGNUMRECORDS.COM

Distributed in the UK by **HARMONIA MUNDI**

WarnerClassics

Rachel KOLLY D'ALBA



PASSION YSAÏE
Six Sonatas for Unaccompanied Violin
AVAILABLE NOW



FRENCH IMPRESSIONS
Saint-Saëns: Violin Concerto No.3
Chausson: Poème • Ravel: Tzigane
Ysaÿe: Histoires de l'enfant pauvre
Op. 29 & Rêve d'enfant Op.16
AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 2011

www.warnerclassics.com

Classics + Direct

Editor's Choice

Beethoven	Fidelio (2cd) #	Stemme, Kaufman, Abbado	£16.50
Boughton	The Queen of Cornwall (2cd)	Corp	£17.00
Byrd	Complete Consort Music	Phantasm	£11.00
Cavalli	Artemisia (3cd)	La Venexiana, Cavina	£27.00
Chausson	Concerto + Mathieu	Quatuor Alcan, Lefevre	£13.00
Liszt	Ballade No. 2 etc	de la Salle	£12.50
Mahler	Symphony No. 9 (DVD)	Barenboim	£19.80
Rachmaninov	Piano Concertos 1 & 4	Trpcski, Petrenko	£12.50
Rozsa	Variations on Hungarian Peasant Song	Gamba	£11.00
	Encores: Popper, Debussy, Godard etc	Casals	£10.25
	O Guiding Night - Spanish Mystics	Christophers	£11.95

Recent Recommended Releases

Alwyn	Concerti Grossi Nos. 2 & 3	Lloyd-Jones	£ 5.00
Beethoven	Symphonies 6 & 8, Grosse Fuge	Nagano	£11.95
Beethoven	Complete Bagatelles (SACD)	Brautigam	£10.25
Bruckner	Symphony 9 + Nielsen + Sibelius (3cd)	Dudamel	£15.50
Chopin	Complete Waltzes	Stephen Hough	£10.25
Couperin	Keyboard Works (4cd)	Harpeichord Egarr	£24.50
Debussy	La Mer + Ravel Ma m'ere l'oye etc	Chung	£10.75
Donizetti	Lucia di Lammermoor (2SACD)	Dessay, Gergiev	£19.00
Frescobaldi	Complete Brilliant Edition (15cd+)	Loreggian	£36.50
Schoenberg	Piano Quartet No. 1, Chamber Symphony	Rattle	£ 9.50
Sinding	Violin Concertos 1 - 3 (2cd)	Bielow, Beermann	£25.00
Turnage	Nicole (DVD)	Finley, Bickley, Pappano	£24.00

Free New Release & Special Offer Listings

We accept payment by Cheque / Visa / Mastercard / American Express:

UK CD & DVD Postal Charges

FREE delivery on orders of £24 and above. Orders £23.99 or less add £1.50 P&P

Europe - Up to 2 CDs / DVDs = £2.00, then 50p per disc. Box sets - 50p per disc

Outside Europe at cost. Prices valid until 30.09.11 Include VAT @ 20%.

Office Hours Mon - Friday 9.00am - 5pm. Answerphone at other times.

Orders: 01787 882223 Classics Direct Fax: 01787 882981

90 North Street, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 1RF, UK E-mail: sales@classicsdirect.co.uk

www.classicsdirect.co.uk to view our special offer listings

REPLAY

Germany in wartime and beyond

Furtwängler's Bruckner and a young Celibidache's Berlin broadcasts

"He played without dramatising: this was a deeply felt, sensitive, yet at the same time profoundly spiritual performance, communicating the sharp contours of the original version, with economical and well-considered quickenings of tempo, organically dynamic accentuation and suppleness and vitality of sound." Those words were written in 1942 about **Wilhelm Furtwängler's** performances, in the Alte Philharmonie, of Bruckner's Fifth Symphony. Listening nowadays to this volatile, excitable performance, most critics would hardly claim that Furtwängler conducted "without dramatising", or with "economical and well-considered quickenings of tempo". Anything but, in fact...and yet the thrilling effect remains and Testament's transfer, a "first release from the original master tape", scores over its rivals in terms of added depth and amplitude.

After the Second World War, initially while Furtwängler was being de-Nazified, a brilliant young Romanian by the name of **Sergiu Celibidache** was a popular principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic. Audite's collection of his Berlin broadcasts (1948-1957), which are shared between the Berlin Philharmonic and Berlin RIAS orchestras, includes one or two surprises. What isn't surprising is the distant drone of Berlin Airlift Dakotas that registers during the first CD (1948-49), which includes striking performances of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (broadly paced and grandly played by Gerhard Puchelt), Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole* (full of dramatic contrasts in tone and tempo), Busoni's Violin Concerto (with BPO concertmaster Siegfried Borries, a very earnest reading) and a fiery, Furtwänglerian account of Cherubini's *Anacréon* Overture. Puchelt returns

in the second disc for a superb reading of Hindemith's often delicate Piano Concerto and Gustav Scheck is the accomplished soloist in Harald Genzmer's wartime Flute Concerto, which echoes Hindemith's distinctive style. Celi and the BPO offer a sensitive and surprisingly idiomatic account of Copland's *Appalachian Spring* suite (you could easily be listening to, say, Mitropoulos and the New York Phil) and the last CD is mostly given over to music by Celibidache's composition teacher Heinz Tiessen. His Second Symphony includes much that is both dramatic and musically memorable, especially the second movement, one of the set's interpretative highlights. Tiessen's *Hamlet-Suite* (with a "Totenmarsch" that seems to anticipate Kurt Weill) and *Salambo-Suite* are also included, as is the world premiere of Reinhard Schwarz-Schilling's rigorous Introduction and Fugue for string orchestra. The sound is good and well-refurbished throughout (mastertapes were available). Audite has provided us with valuable insights into both the youthful art of a rostrum giant and the byways of German music in the early to mid-20th century.

THE RECORDINGS



Bruckner Sym No 5 Furtwängler
Testament Ⓜ SBT1466

Various Cpsrs The Complete RIAS Recordings
1948-57 **Celibidache**
Audite Ⓟ Ⓢ AUDITE21 406

The great and the good, past and present

Late Mitropoulos and Boult • Bashmet takes up the baton

ICA Classics continues to honour some of the great masters of the baton with impressive and well-transferred releases, most of them first-time releases. A smooth-sounding edition of Mahler's Third with the Cologne Radio Symphony under **Dimitri Mitropoulos** just about pips rival transfers to the post (radio mastertapes have been used) and the coupling is a craggy, storm-tossed Cologne account of Debussy's *La mer* which, like the Mahler, is from the tail-end of the conductor's life (October 1960). This is pure "Turner-in-sound", especially the closing "Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea", which, to my mind at least, is as close to a Furtwängler *La mer* as we're ever likely to get – unless one actually turns up! Brahms's First with the BBC Symphony under **Adrian Boult** in 1976 is rather more temperate: straight-backed, admirably clear, rhythmically supple and with its big first-movement exposition repeat intact. A good recording, too, just as it is for a 1971 BBC SO Elgar *Enigma* Variations, where cleanly separated violin desks help balance the sound-picture. The well-known organist in the Elgar is George Thalben-Ball and, although I couldn't in all honesty pretend that either performance is Boult's most imposing on disc, both are well worth acquiring.

But the real surprise in this latest ICA Classics batch comes from viola player (as he's principally known) **Yuri Bashmet** and the Novaya Rossiya

State Symphony Orchestra – live recordings of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony (2004) and Brahms's Third (2005). Here everything holds the attention, whether in the sensitive phrase-shaping and careful balancing of the Brahms, or the searing intensity of Tchaikovsky's Sixth (a hair-raisingly fast march-*scherzo* followed by a gentle but very slow opening to the finale). The *Allegro con grazia* second movement is both swift and uncommonly delicate, and everywhere you sense an alert rostrum presence approaching the music afresh. Of the many instrumentalists-turned-conductors who have arrived on the scene in recent years, I'd say that Bashmet has to be among the most original. I look forward to hearing more rostrum work from him, much more. 🎻

THE RECORDINGS



Mahler Sym No 3 Debussy La mer Mitropoulos
ICA Classics Ⓜ Ⓢ ICAC5021

Brahms Sym No 1 Elgar Enigma Vars Boult
ICA Classics Ⓢ ICAC5019

Brahms Sym No 3 Tchaikovsky Sym No 6 Bashmet
ICA Classics Ⓢ ICAC5023

Books

Gershwin's girl • Strauss on stage

George Gershwin

An Intimate Portrait

By Walter Rimler

University of Illinois Press, PB, 240pp

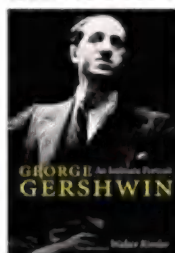
ISBN 978-0-252-03444-2

George Gershwin

By Larry Starr

Yale University Press, PB, 216pp

ISBN 978-0-300-11184-2



The subtitle of Walter Rimler's book is accurate. It focuses on the composer through his disappointments – you can hardly talk about failure in Gershwin – and the role of women in his life. Some of this information is in Howard Pollack's authoritative *George Gershwin: His Life and Work* (U of California Press: 2006) but the role of Kay Swift, the most important woman in Gershwin's life, emerges here as far more crucial

than we realised. She was married to James Warburg, a rich and prominent banker who advised President Roosevelt, but he was also a lyricist to her music. They had three children and for some years her relationship with Gershwin was tolerated. But the Warburgs divorced in 1934, nine years after Kay had met Gershwin, and over that period she had become indispensable to him in every way – she even knew *Porgy and Bess* by heart – and she had her own career as a Broadway composer. Sadly, because Gershwin could not face up to marriage and needed his sexual freedom, they agreed to a separation in the last year of his life, as his excruciating illness dragged him down when he was working on films with Ira in Hollywood.

Gershwin's stupendous successes in the 1920s, with hit songs, concert works such as *Rhapsody in Blue* and the Piano Concerto, and the eventual recognition of his operatic masterpiece, have overshadowed the problems he faced at the time. As an incomparable composer for musical theatre, there were misunderstandings when he entered the concert hall, let alone the opera house.



Oh, Kay! Gershwin's relationships explored

Rimler traces some aspects of a decline through the 1930s. Concert works such as the *Second Rhapsody* and the *Cuban Overture* were not a success; some of the critics were horrendously wrong about *Porgy and Bess*; and Samuel Goldwyn in Hollywood even asked Gershwin why he couldn't write a hit song like Irving Berlin. It becomes a sad story but a very illuminating one, and the book is an enthralling read.

Larry Starr's book considers Gershwin as a Broadway composer. With music examples, it's designed for readers who know the music and want to explore further. Starr points out that in the 1920s musicals like *Lady Be Good* were put together as a hotchpotch based around individual performers, and they were routinely modified from show to show. That

changed in 1931 with *Of Thee I Sing*, in which the book was far more carefully integrated with the songs and their lyrics: both libretto and vocal score were published. This almost operatic attitude to cohesion might have been expected to limit the show's popularity but it was a hit, with 441 performances and a Pulitzer Prize for drama (there weren't any for music at that time).

Starr rightly sees the integrated treatment of the material in *Of Thee I Sing* as moving towards *Porgy and Bess*, where everything combines to create a masterpiece that only Gershwin could have written, using all the skills he had learnt through his experience in the musical theatre and his relentless quest for knowledge reflected in his obsession with finding teachers. He even asked Ravel

for lessons; Ravel referred him to Nadia Boulanger, who said there was nothing she could teach him. Then he went to the much more intellectual Joseph Schillinger.

Starr discusses the alleged gap between the Gershwin of the musical theatre and the concert hall and concludes: "His music tells us in the clearest possible way that, while the schism may be our perception, it is not his aesthetic reality." It has taken the highbrow critics a long time to recognise that the public was right all along. **Peter Dickinson**

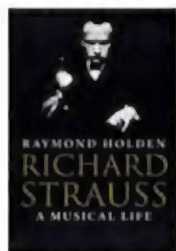
Richard Strauss

A Musical Life

By Raymond Holden

Yale University Press, PB, 344pp

ISBN 978-0-300-12642-6



In the June issue I welcomed *The Cambridge Companion to Richard Strauss*, edited by Charles Youmans, which although biographical, dealt in the main with Strauss's music and his compositional process.

Now from Raymond Holden comes an admirable supplementary volume (with excellent appendices) which centres on Strauss's long complementary career as a conductor/performer, not only in his own music but in the music of others, most particularly Mozart. Holden tells us that Strauss's father, Franz, was a superb horn player, described by Hans von Bülow as "the Joachim of the Waldhorn". He was also very much an anti-Wagnerian, an influence which his son was first to accept but very soon to reverse completely.

In February 1884 Strauss, already a more than able musician, met Hans von Bülow, who immediately commissioned his Suite for 13 Wind Instruments, Op 4, and was to be a "most decisive" figure in his life. He invited his young protégé to become his assistant conductor and Strauss was able to observe his mentor's economical and elegant conducting style, on which he closely modelled his own. One has only to watch Strauss conducting on DVD to see how little movement he needs to control the orchestra (he used a long, thin, tapered baton and commented that "the left hand has nothing to do with conducting"). Sir Adrian Boult later described his undoubtedly influential Mozart performances as "astonishingly light and lively", and noted that in the symphonies he used greater flexibility in shaping second subjects but reserved expressive rubato for slow movements. In the *Jupiter* Symphony, he reprised the Trio of the Minuet after the return of the opening section.

Strauss, somewhat tongue-in-cheek but also with underlying serious intent, provided

"10 Golden Rules for Conductors", of which the following three are the most pertinent: "Never look encouragingly at the brass except with a short glance to give an important cue. Never let the horns and woodwind out of your sight: if you can hear them at all, they are still too strong. If you think the brass is not blowing hard enough, tone it down another shade or two."

Already extremely confident, between 1889 and 1893 Strauss conducted 16 subscription concerts at Weimar; and in January 1891 his performance of Wagner's *Prelude and Liebestod* from *Tristan* introduced him to the soprano Pauline de Ahna, who was to become his wife ("something of an emotional spitfire", suggests Holden). They married in 1894 and she proved a true and passionate partner over many years in every respect.

As a conductor, Strauss was immensely prolific. He saw himself as a Mozart "missionary" and, during his second period with von Bülow from 1894 to 1898, he directed 272 performances including 85 of Wagner, whose cause he now espoused, and 98 of Mozart including new productions of *Die Entführung* and even *Così fan tutte* (the latter's plot not to every taste, including, incidentally, Karajan's) and *Don Giovanni*, adding the "scena ultima" (which finalises the plot after the Don's descent into Hell). In 1896 he gave his first performances of the complete Beethoven symphonies (he particularly admired No 9) and in 1899 he conducted *The Ring* for the first time.

The peak of his career came with *Salome* in 1905, which firmly put Strauss on the international map. Many were outraged by its salacious climax and the opera's supposed "decadence", but not the public. Strauss conducted 60 performances between 1906 and 1908, and the huge financial success of the opera provided him with his villa in Garmisch, which was to become his permanent home with Pauline.

Raymond Holden suggests that the period from 1908 to 1921 proved to be the summit of Strauss's career. As a conductor he added the early Mahler symphonies to his repertoire, and even the Bach *Brandenburg Concertos*, but apart from a great deal of his own music, Mozart and Beethoven dominated his programmes. In 1897-98 he conducted in London; in 1902 he gave four very successful concerts in Glasgow and Edinburgh. In 1903 he enjoyed a holiday in the Isle of Wight (the English climate was kind to him) and that same year brought a Richard Strauss Festival in Amsterdam with the Concertgebouw, at which Pauline proved a true vocal star. Then in 1904 he enjoyed conducting 36 concerts in the USA, before returning to London in 1904-05 directing the *Symphonia domestica* with the "splendid" Queens Hall Orchestra, which had been well rehearsed by Sir Henry

Strauss's life surveyed



Wood, whom he greatly admired. From 1905 onwards Strauss began to make piano roll recordings and when *Elektra* arrived at Covent Garden in 1906, such was his fame that the whole royal family attended. In 1911 the immensely successful *Der Rosenkavalier* arrived, followed in 1912 by *Ariadne auf Naxos* (which had to be revised but later became popular).

With the opening of the First World War in 1914, which he over-confidently stated "we are bound to win", his concerts were more geographically restricted; but in the immediate post-war era he continued to make recordings, this time on 78rpm discs and eventually using the new electric system. The quoted reviews in *The Gramophone* by Compton Mackenzie and others are fascinating.

He continued to conduct and tour in Europe in the 1920s, and in 1931 introduced a revised version of Mozart's *Idomeneo*. But in 1933, with the Nazis taking over in Germany, his reputation was severely diminished when he agreed to replace Bruno Walter at a Berlin Philharmonic Concert and Toscanini – who had resigned as an anti-Nazi gesture – at Bayreuth. He continued to conduct in Germany during the Second World War although he soon became *persona non grata* with the Nazi regime. After the war's close, Beecham organised a 1947 festival of his music in London. But he was old and failing, and he returned to Garmisch, where he died in September 1949, not living to experience the great success of the recordings of his music when they arrived in stereo, and later on CD, which restored him in the public's eye to the pantheon of great German composers.

Ivan March



JOIN US AT THE 2011 **GRAMOPHONE** CLASSICAL MUSIC AWARDS

On October 6, Gramophone will once again celebrate the achievements of the best and the brightest of the classical music world. The event at London's Dorchester hotel on Park Lane is one of the most important events in the classical music calendar and this is your chance to be among the first to see who are this year's winners.



AS WELL AS THE CEREMONY ITSELF YOU WILL ENJOY

- A PRE-AWARDS APÉRITIF
- A FABULOUS THREE-COURSE LUNCH (INCLUDING WINE)
- A COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF THE AWARDS ISSUE OF THE MAGAZINE AND THE 2012 GRAMOPHONE CLASSICAL MUSIC GUIDE
- AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE GRAMOPHONE EDITORIAL TEAM

Each year many of the Award-winning artists perform live at the event; last year the 2010 Artist of the year, Joyce Di Donato, sang "Over the rainbow" with Maestro Antonio Pappano accompanying her on piano.

Tickets cost £220 per person or £2200 for a table of 10
For further information and to book your place go to
www.gramophone.co.uk/awardstickets

We look forward to seeing you there

Musical Journeys

Ojai

Cardiff

Stockholm



Getting mellow in Ojai

Philip Kennicott takes in jazz, Crumb and politics, courtesy of Dawn Upshaw in California

Ojai

Even the programme book at the 65-year-old Ojai Festival can make it seem like you've fallen down a mystical rabbit hole. "Ojai is a child of the earth, and we know it when we see it nestled in its cradle," writes one author. Participants at this brief, dense and highly respected summer event speak of having "an Ojai moment" and say things like, "That's so Ojai." During a violin recital, a woman with greying pigtails hanging over her homespun jacket painted impromptu watercolours. Even soprano Dawn Upshaw, the music director of this year's four-day festival in June, attended concerts in very sensible shoes.

But you'd have to be a hardened cynic to resist the charms of the place. Over the years, Aaron Copland, Igor Stravinsky, Pierre Boulez, Peter Maxwell Davies, John Adams and Simon Rattle have been drawn to this crossroads village in the misty mountains two hours north of Los Angeles. Each has served as music director, curating a mix of concerts that include jazz, world music and standard repertory. New music has always been the staple, however, and it is the new works and the festival's historical commitment to the unorthodox, the challenging and the rigorous, that has earned Ojai a legendary reputation as one of the most important events on the annual American cultural calendar.

In 2004, Thomas Morris left his position as the head of the Cleveland Orchestra to become artistic director of Ojai and recently, it seems, he is putting his mark on the festival by choosing annual music directors whose experience falls outside the usual résumé of conductor or composer. In 2009, the new music ensemble Eighth Blackbird served collectively. In 2013, choreographer Mark Morris will take over.

This year it was Dawn Upshaw, who made the event a reflection of her own career and interests. "I'd like to say that we had some grand plan," said Upshaw at an afternoon symposium. "But actually it was all about me." If she had any ordinary career, that might seem narcissistic. But Upshaw has consistently followed the path less taken and, far from being solipsistic, her choices for Ojai reflected the deep ethical commitment that has always been at the core of her artistry.

Upshaw seems intent on proving a thorny proposition – that being a good person is somehow essential to being a good artist.

The Australian Chamber Orchestra, a small string ensemble that has worked with Upshaw in the past, came to perform music of Bach, Grieg, Schoenberg and Webern and a new work written for Upshaw by the jazz composer and band leader Maria Schneider. The legendary Afghan singer Ustad Farida Mahwash, accompanied by the rubab, tabla and harmonium, sang ghazals late into a starry night. Schneider's band played a morning concert of her own compositions, chromatically adventurous jazz with restless inner lines. Upshaw presided over an informal evening of songs sung by her remarkably accomplished students at the vocal programme she runs at Bard College. And Peter Sellars directed Upshaw in a staged version of George Crumb's *The Winds of Destiny*, a collection of American folk songs and spirituals, brilliantly orchestrated for percussion ensemble.

There was politics in the air (Peter Sellars pontificating about America, war and foreign policy) but also some deep thought about music's role in our society (Upshaw spoke eloquently about not "presenting" songs, about singing without the mask of artistry). George Crumb, now in his 80s, attended and was treated like a rock star. Richard Tognetti, the violinist and dedicated surfer who leads the Australian Chamber Orchestra, played a heartbreaking rendition of Ravel's *Kaddish*. And the new work, Schneider's *Winter Morning Walks*, with its easy mix of edgy orchestration and popular melodic appeal, will surely be a calling card for Upshaw, who was in good voice, with diction so fine there was no need to follow the printed texts of poet Ted Kooser's verses.

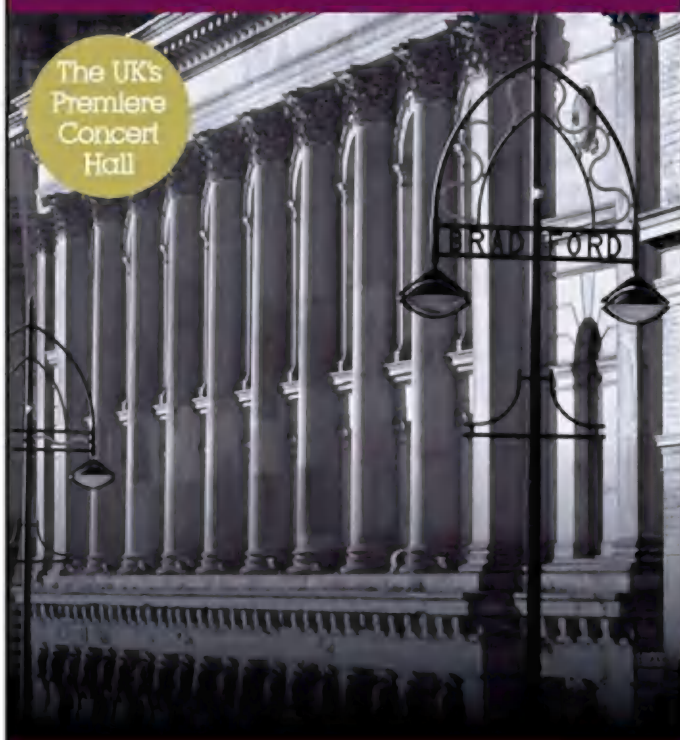
But it was just before the performance of Crumb's *Winds of Destiny* that I had my Ojai moment. Next to me a young man held a copy of the score. "There, where the vibraphone and the piano play together," he said, pointing to the thickets of ominous black notes on the page. "That's the best part." The audience is as knowledgeable as they come at Ojai and Crumb's scores were selling like souvenir T-shirts. Even more remarkable, the young man was right. 🎧

Bradford International Orchestral Concert Season : 2011/12

with Bradford Chamber Season

Pass on your passion for classical music

The UK's
Premiere
Concert
Hall



"Marvellous hall in
the heart of England with
all its history!"

JACEK KASPSZYK, CONDUCTOR
POLISH NATIONAL RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

"A treat to perform in one
of your country's oldest
halls with it's great
acoustic"

TERJE MIKKELSEN, CONDUCTOR
TCHAIKOVSKY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF MOSCOW RADIO

Call today for a new brochure

ST GEORGE'S **01274 432000**
CONCERT HALL bradford-theatres.co.uk
(booking fees apply)

City of Bradford MBC
and Bradford BID

MUSICAL JOURNEYS

Andrei Bondarenko:
should he have won
Cardiff Singer of the World?



As usual, Cardiff's biennial song fest set the cat
among the canaries, reports **David Threasher**

Cardiff

Cardiff was the centre of the world for lovers of the vocal arts for a week in mid-June. Not only was Take That performing at the Millennium Stadium and bringing the city to a standstill but, just down the road, 20 young singers from around the world were doing battle in the high-profile BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition. And as surely as the competition comes around every two years, it just as regularly provokes heated argument among aficionados in the environs of St David's Hall – and further afield.

The facts are that the competition was won this year by Moldovan soprano Valentina Naforniță, who sang music from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* and *Rusalka*. The Song Prize was won a couple of days earlier by Ukrainian baritone Andrei Bondarenko, who held the audience spellbound through songs from Schumann's Eichendorff *Liederkreis* and Sviridov's *Russia Cast Adrift*. He had beaten off competition from America, Ireland, Switzerland and from Naforniță herself, but she triumphed in the main final over Bondarenko and competitors from England, Russia and South Korea.

So whence the arguments? Many will remember the 2009 competition, when the prize was awarded, not to the striking

virtuoso countertenor, Mynenko, but to the less remarkable *can belto* Russian soprano, Scherbachenko. In St David's Hall itself this year, the loudest cheers at the final were for the Ukrainian and the buzz in the foyers was all about him. The beautiful Moldovan seemed not to be on top form: the week's exertions had understandably taken their toll on all singers, but she seemed to take time to "warm up" and appeared to have one or two vocal problems early on. She may have taken the audience prize (voted for by the television and radio audience), but sitting six or seven yards from the stage – as I was – gives a very different impression of a singer to watching them on TV. There is no doubt she'll go on to a fine career, but once again there's the feeling of an opportunity having been missed.

At least being in the hall meant not having to suffer the TV presentation. With wearying predictability, Petroc Trelawny was the anchor, swapping banalities with Mary King (who she?). Meanwhile, backstage, Josie D'Arby buttonholed the exhausted singers one by one to grill them with such penetrating enquiries as "How do you feel?" Presumably the BBC thinks that planting ex-Children's BBC presenter D'Arby 'twixt stage and dressing room will attract the "yoof". It is time the Beeb grew up and realised that its audiences, young or otherwise, can spot a crock a mile off. ☺



Heady edda:
Sequentia recreate
'The Rheingold Curse'

Fabrice Fitch hails the 10th anniversary
of a Swedish festival of early music

Stockholm

Stockholm's Old Town (Gamla Stan) is dotted about with churches bearing exotic names such as "Tyska kyrkan" (the German church) and "Finska kyrkan" (the Finnish church). These were the venues for the Stockholm Early Music Festival, which celebrated its 10th season in June with a bumper crop of concerts over five days. As I ambled along the narrow streets, with their high, colourful houses and with the summer sun in attendance well into the night, the festival's slogan, "it's never too late for early music", seemed perfectly apposite.

The opening concert saw Andrew Parrott direct the Swedish Radio Choir in an all-Gabrieli programme. Afterwards, Parrott professed himself pleased with the choir's gusto in attacking somewhat unfamiliar territory – not least owing to the conductor's insistence on the correct voice types: "no countertenors!" The following evenings ranged widely, from Sequentia's recreation of Icelandic saga, *The Rheingold Curse*, to humorous, high-Baroque entertainment with the Barokksolistene and members of I Fagiolini. The Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin ended the festival on a European theme; but the high-point was Ensemble Kapsberger, whose programme

centred on the little-known Santiago de Murcia (1673-1739). This was consummate music-making, which held the audience in thrall.

Earlier that day, the ensemble's presiding genius, Rolf Lislevand, gave an open masterclass on the art of improvising on Baroque dance patterns. This gave the evening concert an extra edge, as Lislevand showed how far one could take the simplest of ideas in extemporised performance.

With three or four events daily, there was much to choose from, my only regret being that the 14th and 15th centuries went unrepresented. The daytime events included wonderfully fresh-sounding Polish Baroque music from the young ensemble, *alla polacca* – for me, one of this season's discoveries.

The festival has now become a fixture of the city's early summer and its potential to attract visitors is not lost on its director, Peter Pontvik, who observes with some satisfaction that "Stockholm has now become a station for the early music train". Attendance was at or near full capacity, with all but one of the evening concerts broadcast live on national radio (something one hardly sees in Britain today).

In a period that has seen early music ensembles lose some of their pulling-power, the festival's slogan sounds a needed note of militant optimism. Here's to the next 10 years! ☺

THE KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVALS AT SEA

ON BOARD FRED. OLSEN'S BLACK WATCH



THE KIRKER MUSIC CRUISE TO THE NORWEGIAN FJORDS, BERGEN & OSLO

10 - 19 MAY 2012

Dover - Stavanger - Flaam - Olden - Bergen
Kristiansand - Oslo - Dover

With Dame Josephine Barstow, soprano & the Chilingirian String Quartet who will celebrate their 40th anniversary year in 2012, and performances by the Kirker Choir. As well as enjoying the comprehensive programme of concerts, there will be the opportunity to join the Kirker choir led by our Choir Master, Christopher Monckton, and take part in two performances: one on board the Black Watch and one in Oslo at the end of the cruise. Extensive rehearsals and coaching programmes are included.

THE KIRKER MEDITERRANEAN MUSIC FESTIVAL AT SEA

7 - 22 JULY 2012

Dover - Motril (Granada) - Cagliari (Sardinia) - Naples
Palermo (Sicily) - Algiers - Lisbon - Dover

Join the Doric String Quartet; Andrew Ball, piano; Nelly Miricioiu, soprano; Morgan Szymanski, classical guitar; Laura Samuel, violin; Simon Rowland-Jones, viola; John Myerscough, cello and Adam Walker, flute.

The musical programmes for both cruises have been planned by Simon Rowland-Jones and feature a host of internationally-acclaimed musicians. There will be a series of talks and interviews with the artists and a range of exclusive shore excursions at selected ports of call for Kirker clients.

Prices from: Norwegian Fjords £1,598 per person,
Mediterranean £2,298 per person

Prices include all concerts, talks and interviews as described, full board throughout and two private drinks parties.



www.kirkerholidays.com

To make a booking or request a copy of our Music Cruise or Cultural Tours & Music Holidays brochure please call

020 7593 2284

Please quote source code GGM

Kirker

FOR DISCERNING TRAVELLERS

ABTA **AITO** **ASSURED**
ABTA No. V6595

GRAMOPHONE SEPTEMBER 2011 99

Main Contributor – Nordica-Fondet

Lorin Maazel as your mentor?

Stand in front of the leading Nordic orchestras and win a prize of 20,000 euros. This is all yours if you have the talent and drive to compete in the world's most exciting competition for young conductors.

Maestro Lorin Maazel is president of our jury. That guarantees that your performance will be met with the best possible judgment. In addition, Maestro Maazel offers to be a mentor for the winner!

Check www.malkocompetition.com to apply online, learn more about our jury, the prizes, and what it takes to win.

See you in Copenhagen 5-12 May 2012

MALKO

COMPETITION FOR YOUNG CONDUCTORS

The last day for applications is 1 October 2011

Presented by Danish National Symphony Orchestra & Nordic Artists Management



INTERNATIONAL
FRANZ LISZT
PIANO COMPETITION

International Franz Liszt Piano Competition

Prize winners of the 9th Liszt Competition, Utrecht

Masataka Goto (1st Prize)

Olga Kozlova (2nd Prize)

Oleksandr Poliykov (3rd Prize)

International Prize winners tour will continue into 2014 See all details on www.liszt.nl

WHY SHOULD A MUSICAL BOY COME TO HARROW SCHOOL?

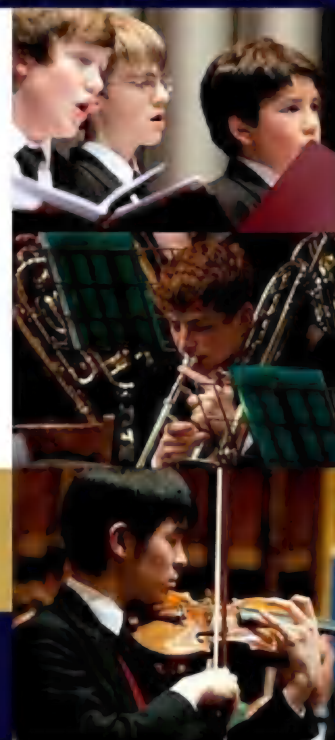


- Because Harrow is a full boarding school that offers an exceptionally wide range of activities at the weekends, including music.
- Because Harrow is achieving a remarkably high standard of musical tuition and performance across a wide range of musical styles and genres.
- Many of our teachers are Professors at Conservatoires and many are to be found playing with London's top orchestras.
- Because Harrow is achieving excellent exam results without becoming a crammer.
- Because, with 10% of the pupils being Music Scholars, there are plenty of outstanding musicians to provide musical leadership.
- Because Harrow encourages musical boys to take a full part in all other aspects of School life.

"The School is incomparable in relation to opportunities offered to musicians and artists. We perform frequently; we have the best teachers; we are respected for our contributions and we have amazing facilities. What more can a schoolboy ask for?" – A pupil in the Upper Sixth

Find out more

Click on Admissions at www.harrowschool.org.uk • Come to an Open Morning at Harrow
Contact Mr David Woodcock on 020 8872 8231 or email on music@harrowschool.org.uk



The Best Events Worldwide

Sir Andrew Davis in Melbourne • Valery Gergiev at the Rotterdam Philharmonic Festival • Joshua Bell with the Montreal Symphony • Eugene Onegin at LA Opera • The Academy of Ancient Music in Cambridge

01

September

Melbourne, Town Hall

Sir Andrew Davis conducts the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in Dvořák's Symphony No 8,

Janáček's *Taras Bulba* and Liszt's *Totentanz* with piano soloist Nikolai Demidenko.

Details: +61 3 9929 9600 / www.mso.com.au

02

September

Southwell, Minster

Composer Christian Forshaw and his Sanctuary Ensemble perform works from Forshaw's albums, and a world premiere with the Equinox Saxophone Ensemble. Details: +44 (0)1636 812933 /

www.christianforshaw.com

04

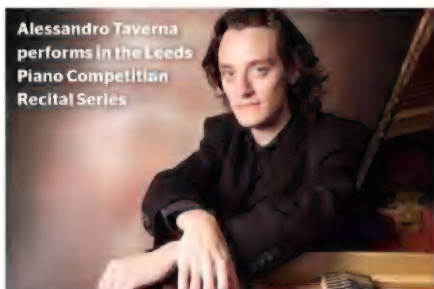
September

Leeds, University

Leeds Piano Competition prize-winner Alessandro Taverna performs works by Beethoven,

Liszt, Debussy, Busoni and Stravinsky as part of the Leeds Piano Competition Recital Series. Details: +44 (0)113 244 6586 /

www.leedspliano.com



Alessandro Taverna performs in the Leeds Piano Competition Recital Series

08

September

New York, Baryshnikov Arts Center

The St Luke's Chamber Ensemble perform Arnold Schoenberg and

Rainer Riehn's chamber arrangement of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with tenor soloist Paul Groves on September 8 and 9. Details: +1 646 731 3200 / www.bacnyc.org

08

September

Rotterdam, Gergiev Festival

The Rotterdam Philharmonic Gergiev Festival runs from September 8 to 18 under the theme

"The Sea and the City". Highlights include Gergiev conducting Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*, Bruckner's Eighth Symphony under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and guest appearances from Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic, and pianist Alexandre Tharaud. Details: +31 10 217 17 17 / www.gergievfestival.nl

13

September

Montreal, Place des Arts

Kent Nagano conducts the Montreal Symphony in Glazunov's Violin Concerto and Tchaikovsky's

"Meditation" from *Memory of a Cherished Place* with soloist Joshua Bell, and Messiaen's *Turangalila-Symphonie* with pianist Angela Hewitt and Jean Laurendeau on ondes Martenot. Performances take place on September 13 and 14. Details: +1 514 842 9951 / www.osm.ca

16

September

Besançon, Music Festival

The 64th Besançon Franche-Comté International Music Festival runs from September

16 to October 1 in conjunction with the 52nd International Competition for Young Conductors. Performers include Anna Caterina Antonacci, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Isabelle Faust and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Details: +33 381 25 05 85 /

www.festival-besancon.com

17

September

Los Angeles, Performing Arts Center

LA Opera presents Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* conducted by James

Conlon, starring Dalibor Jeniš in the title-role and Oksana Dyka as Tatyana on September 17, 21 and 25, and October 1, 6 and 9. Details: +1 213 972 8001 / www.laopera.com

17

September

Tokyo, Suntory Hall

The Tokyo Symphony conducted by Naoto Otomo perform Schoenberg's orchestration of

Brahms's Piano Quartet No 1 and Schumann's Cello Concerto with soloist Dai Miyata. Details: +81 44 520 1511 /

www.tokyosymphony.com

18

September

Windsor, Castle

Cellist Yuki Ito, winner of the third Windsor Festival International String Competition, opens the

Autumn Windsor Festival by performing the Dvořák Cello Concerto with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Details: +44 (0)1753 714 364 /

www.windsorfestival.com

20

September

Cambridge, West Road Concert Hall

The Academy of Ancient Music directed by Richard Egarr presents

"Musical Revolutions: Birth of the Symphony" including performances of Haydn's Symphony No 49, FX Richter's Symphony No 4 and Mozart's Symphony No 1. Details: +44 (0)1223 301509 / www.aam.co.uk

24

September

Manchester, Royal Northern College of Music

Gábor Takács-Nagy conducts the Manchester Camerata in "Portrait

of a Hungarian" including Haydn's Piano Concerto No 11 with soloist Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Bartók's *Divertimento* and Haydn's Symphony No 49, *La Passione*. Details: +44 (0)161 907 5555 / www.rncm.ac.uk

28

September

Oxford, Chamber Music Festival

The Oxford Chamber Music

Festival runs from September 28 to October 1 with performances from Ilya Gringolts, Nicolas Altstaedt, Natalie Clein, David Cohen, Julius Drake, Nicholas Daniel, James Gilchrist and founder Priya Mitchell. This year's composer in residence is Fazil Say. Details: +44 01865 305 305 / www.ocmf.net

30

September

Madrid, Teatro Real

Semyon Bychkov conducts a new production of Strauss's

Elektra starring Christine Goerke and Deborah Polaski in the title-role, and Jane Henschel and Rosalind Plowright as Klytämnestra on September 30, and October 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 15. Details: +34 915 16 06 60 / www.teatro-real.com

30

September

Boston, Symphony Hall

The Boston Symphony Orchestra open their season with an

all-Mozart programme including Violin Concertos Nos 3 and 5 with soloist Anne-Sophie Mutter. Details: +1 617 266 1492 / www.bso.org



Semyon Bychkov conducts Elektra at Madrid's Teatro Real

Tune Surfing

Spotify helps James Jolly update our *Guide*, radio streaming, Britten colleague Vyvyan – and 1911



Jennifer Vyvyan
on song for Britten

The summer, for me, is the time for up-dating and editing *The Gramophone Classical Music Guide*, a concentrated few months of reading hundreds of reviews and deciding which recordings should be included, which updated and which “retired”. One of the biggest problems these days (though the

flip side speaks of wonderful abundance) is that very little is ever deleted: if its physical life comes to an end, it usually lives on in the world of cyber-space as a download. For this year’s task, I invested in a new iMac and decided to work, not in the study, but at the dining-room table within perfect listening distance of my

main hi-fi. With the iMac’s input ability to connect with other Apple products, it was logical to supplement the Squeezebox network music player I have been using with an AirPort Express card and control my listening from where I work, and do that with the benefit of a decent amplifier and speakers.

I mentioned a couple of issues ago the Airfoil software I had downloaded, which allows one to stream the music from Spotify via the AirPort Express and connect my work environment with my listening one. The great advantage of being able to listen from the iTunes player or from Spotify is that the choice is immediate and immense (and without headphones or the computer’s inbuilt speakers the experience of playing music through the hi-fi is so much more appealing). Frequently, as I worked on a particular composer or group of works, I could call up exactly the recording I was reading about, and listen there and then.

This year I decided to make the Bach cello suites my soundtrack for the 2012 *Guide* – it is music that can be listened to at many different levels, from the totally engaged and rewarding (there are few composers apart from JSB who nourish the heart and the head so completely), to the unengaged but reassuringly appealing status of background music. It’s not something I’m entirely happy about, though I must admit to liking the companionship of a lone cellist and some of the greatest music ever written for the instrument. Having exhausted the versions I keep on my Mac (Casals, Fournier, Isserlis and Wispelwey Mk II – my current favourite), I’ve worked my way through the Spotify offerings (Kirshbaum, Ma both Mk I and II, Rostropovich, Mørk, Onczay, Tortelier, Maisky Mk I, de Williencourt and Gaillard) – and probably missed a few others too. It really is staggering how much music you can find without even getting up, or even getting out your wallet (though Spotify’s modest fees to avoid adverts or to stream in higher quality sound seem a small price to pay).

The other source of my summer listening this year has been via the radio facility within iTunes, again streamed through the hi-fi. If you’re a devotee of **BBC Radio 3** (I hope you are!), this is an easy way of accessing the hi-res stream that will make your Proms listening even more enjoyable. But the iTunes radio feature allows you to globe-trot and explore some remarkably niche radio stations from around the world. **New Music Philadelphia**

The essential download playlist No 37 Vintage of 1911

Jehan Alain Organ works **M-C Alain** (Erato) *it, Am*

Jehan Alain Dances of Life and Death **Whitehead** (Chandos) *A, Am, it, CS, CO*

Bernard Herrmann Film scores **LAPO / Salonen** (Sony Classical) *A, Am, it, S*

Bernard Herrmann Chamber works **Tippett Qt; Bliss** (Signum) *A, Am, it, CS, S*

Giancarlo Menotti Amahl and the Night Visitors **NBC / Schippers** (Naxos) *it, CS, CO*

Giancarlo Menotti Violin Concerto **Koh; Hickox** (Chandos) *it, CS, CO*

Franz Reizenstein Piano Sonata etc **Martin** (Continuum) *it, S*

Franz Reizenstein Wind Quintet **Ensemble Modern** (Nimbus) *CS*

Nino Rota Symphony No 3 etc **Filarmonica '900 / Noseda** (Chandos) *it, CS, CO*

Nino Rota Film scores **Orquesta Ciudad de Granada / Pons** (HM) *it*

A = Ariana Am = Amazon CO = Classicsonline CS = Classicalshop it = iTunes S = Spotify (not available in all territories)

does exactly what it suggests and features some of the City's up-and-coming talent – I admit that I wouldn't want to listen for too long, but it's a great idea. Along similar lines, there's also **sfSoundRadio** playing electronic, improvised, composed or experimental music from San Francisco. **Radio Chopin** gives you music by the Polish master, nothing more, nothing less – and it features some pretty classy players, judging by the half hour I spent in its company (and there's a **Radio Beethoven** which does the obvious). **Symphonic Masters** plays music only conducted by Leonard Bernstein, if I understand correctly – which is perhaps taking niche segmentation a little far! My new favourite breakfast show comes courtesy of **Classical Minnesota Public Radio**, though as we're six hours ahead it's more of a lunchtime companion – a nice choice of music with quite a few imaginative surprises. And the great American classical specialists are there too: **KUSC**, home of the inimitable Jim Svejda, Chicago's **WFMT** and Boston's **WGBH**. Looking towards mainland Europe, you can enjoy the German **MDR** or France's **Air Classique** (there are regular news spots, so you can polish your French at the same time!).

Talking of niche interests, if you are an admirer of Benjamin Britten and his circle, you may be interested in a splendid site devoted to the soprano Jennifer Vyvyan (jennifervyvyan.com). Though she died young (just 49), Vyvyan was the singer for whom Britten created the roles of Lady Rich in *Gloriana*, the Governess in *The Turn of the Screw* and Tytania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* among many others. When she died, her papers, diaries and photographs were all stored away and languished for many years, until her son contacted the critic and broadcaster Michael White, who has created this fascinating website full of treasures. Listening again to her silvery soprano – and there are some nicely chosen clips on the site – is to be reminded what a loss her death in 1974 was to the English music scene.

For my download choices, five composers, all born exactly 100 years ago, in 1911. Organists will be familiar with the short-lived Jehan Alain and his wonderful *Litanies* (among much else), largely due to the advocacy of his sister Marie-Claire, doyenne of French organists. Two composers better known for their work with films also have much to offer: Bernard Herrmann and Nino Rota. And Franz Reizenstein, German-born but who lived in the UK and the US for most of his life: his *Variations on the Lambeth Walk* in the style of many great composers is well worth acquiring (or at least sampling – it's on Spotify!).

BLOGWATCH

www.gramophone.co.uk/blog

Caroline Gill watches as the Lady Blunt Stradivarius sells for £9.8m

The build-up had been tense, but on June 21, at 8.15pm, the Lady Blunt Stradivarius violin, the most perfectly-preserved in existence, was sold for £9.8m (\$15.9m) in an online sale, to raise money for Japanese disaster relief.

That is well over four times the record and there was a real worry that the open market might not be able to support such a piece. The great and good of the violin world were invited to a small private reception, running over the final two hours of bidding.

Nowadays, we're lucky to see one significant instrument come up every two years, and then usually only by secretive private sale.

That wasn't the case for the Lady Blunt, though. When the Nippon Foundation decided to sell the jewel of its collection to help its own people recover from its worst natural disaster, it may have taken a risk choosing Tarisio, the online auction house for stringed instruments, but it has paid off. A philanthropic act such as this warranted a philanthropic style of sale.

Giving the public the chance to see this instrument, only ever really played when it was owned by Lady Anne Blunt (1837-1917), granddaughter of Lord Byron, was in itself philanthropic. Further, Tarisio, with its long legs and ability to take the violin on tour globally, gave the fiddle the exposure it deserved.

The reception was dominated by the Lady Blunt, hanging serenely in her glass cabinet. It was a bit like being in the presence of a very beautiful, reclusive film star: no-one really wanted to be caught staring, but couldn't take their eyes off her. I was not willing to miss a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study this star quality. I spent an hour gazing at the most perfect example of a violin to hit the open market since Sotheby's sold this same violin in 1971. An

extraordinary fact about this violin is how new it looks. Had the Lady Blunt come to me without my knowing what it was, my first reaction would have been to say it was a copy, simply because the condition of the Lady Blunt is what one might have expected of a Stradivarius violin in the 19th Century. The Lady Blunt has crisp edges, the channelling around the purfling (the black lines which outline the body of the violin) is deep and unworn, and the scroll is so perfectly crafted it looks like a vortex optical illusion. The most striking thing, though, is the varnish: this thin, translucent coating, that only Stradivari was able to create, is almost perfect. It looks like it isn't quite dry and changes colour, depending on the angle and light you see it in.

In the last half hour of the auction, two usernames were competing on the overhead computer screens, in £250,000 increments: one a long number beginning with "08", the other "borodin". It was hard to imagine that the international dialling code of "08" for Japan was a coincidence, and that "borodin" was going

to be, say, French, so it seems the duellists were Japanese and Russian. Bidding closed at 8.15pm with 08's £8.75m (£9.8m including premium), to a roar of applause. I would be amazed if the buyer weren't Japanese, but there is little doubt we won't be seeing this beautiful instrument again for a long time. It is not to be played, every-

one agrees: this violin needs to be maintained as a context for every violin made since. The other 598-odd Strads left in playing condition do quite enough to champion the golden Strad sound; this one needs to fly the flag for the physical beauty of Stradivari's work. The knowledge of its existence is a testament to human achievement, and with the money it made being ploughed directly into work on the ground in Japan, the reality of its existence will make the world a better place.



The Gramophone Player

Gramophone's online media Player features a huge amount of music for you to stream, including longer excerpts from the monthly Editor's Choice recordings, in-vision excerpts of DVD recommendations, works related to one of the magazine's features and a newly remastered recording from the archives – and all for free! www.gramophone.co.uk



High Fidelity

News and reviews of the latest in audio, home cinema and new technology

Denon and Marantz go big on networking

On display at a recent shared press event – the two brands share a parent company – were complete new AV receiver ranges from Denon and Marantz. The two are up to speed with current home cinema technology such as 3D compatibility and HD audio decoding, and they're making much of their commitment to streaming music and video content, with networking featuring prominently.

Marantz has three new receivers with network capability: the full-size SR5006, at £629, and SR6006 (£849), along with the slimline NR1602 (£549). All offer DLNA streaming, Apple AirPlay and the ability to have content "pushed" to them from Android portable devices, and can access internet radio and premium streaming services.

In addition there's a new set-up wizard built-in: when the receiver is first powered-up and connected to a TV, this will "walk you through" all the stages of set-up with a series of graphics and pictures. As a result, the new models come without a hefty printed instruction manual: instead, there's a simplified "get started" guide, plus reference manuals provided on CD-ROM. The company also plans to upgrade its iPod/iPhone control app, allowing the receivers to be driven from the handheld devices, and will be launching iPad and Android versions.

In the Denon range, networking starts with the £500 AVR-1912, which has networking and streaming functions and the on-screen set-up wizard, plus three simple preset buttons to which internet radio stations can be allocated for swift access. Other network-capable

models include the £799 AVR-2312 and £999 AVR-3312, which add more HDMI connectivity and other options for use in larger home cinema systems. Denon is also set to launch its own "internet tuner": the £500 DSP-720AE offers a full range of network, internet and streaming options, as well as an FM/AM tuner.

Both companies' products have been designed to stay ahead of forthcoming European power regulations, while maintaining functions such as standby pass-through of HDMI and fast network start-up.

Denon/Marantz
+44 (0)2890 279830
www.denon.co.uk
www.marantz.co.uk



Krell's high-end SA-CD/CD player bucks the streaming music trend

If the age of the high-end CD player is over, replaced by computers and streaming clients as some would have you believe, no one told one of the USA's best-known high-end audio manufacturers, Krell.

The Connecticut-based company has just launched its Cipher SACD/CD machine, which is now available in the UK for £12,000.

The player is said to use an advanced disc drive, which unusually has separate optical pick-up mechanisms for SACD and CD, while many modern players use hybrid or even DVD-ROM-type drives coupled to the latest Krell digital and analogue circuitry via a custom-designed anti-jitter module of in-house construction.

The balanced digital to analogue converters enable the player to maintain a balanced signal path all the way to the outputs, the player offering a choice of stereo or multichannel output.

Power for the player is from a supply system based on that found in Krell's Evolution e-Series amplifiers, with separate supplies for the digital and analogue sections.

Krell/Absolute Sounds
+44 (0)20 8971 3909
krellonline.com
absolutesounds.com



COMING SOON

MORE STREAMING...

It's not just Marantz and Denon (see above) planning a wide range of streaming devices for the latter part of the year; also on the way is a line-up of AV receivers from Yamaha, some of which have network music capability, and a range of new Pioneer products showcasing network music streaming and control via apps running on iPhones, iPads and the iPod Touch. Expect to see more companies launching not just iOS control applications, but also equivalent software for use on devices running Google's Android system, given the seemingly unstoppable rise of Android in the smartphone market.

...AND MORE CHOICES

As well as the ability to stream content stored on a local network and receive internet radio, it looks like growing numbers of internet-connectable devices will offer access to premium streaming content from the internet. Already many provide simple access to the likes of Last.fm and Napster, but coming very soon will be built-in provision for streaming music service Spotify, and even the ability to stream YouTube content, complete with that provider's Leanback enhanced search.

B&W's new PM1 is a stylish mini-monitor

New from British loudspeaker company

is the PM1, an innovative mini-monitor drawing on the design of the company's flagship 800 Diamond range.

It uses a Carbon Braced Tweeter, with the dome stiffened with a ring of carbon fibre, in a top-mounted Nautilus tube, a Kevlar-cone mid-bass driver and a cabinet combining Matrix bracing within, and a composite front baffle, which is designed for high mass and damping.

The speakers sell for £1995 a pair, with dedicated stands available at £400 a pair.

Bowers & Wilkins
+44 (0)800 232 1513
www.bowers-wilkins.co.uk



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

Life beyond the instruction book

A development from two of the biggest AV names could herald the end of the manual, says **Andrew Everard**

Regular readers will know that I view most instruction books as no more than a necessary evil: as products become more complex, we need them to help us not just make the most of a new acquisition, but simply get it working, but at the same time that complexity means they're becoming ever bulkier and more impenetrable.

So if something goes wrong, or the product just won't do what it's supposed to do, we're reduced to leafing through page after page of tiny print, more often than not in an order that's anything but logical, or resorting to searching online resources for advice and guidance. I know how true that last part can be: a major part of my "other job" is helping readers struggling to get a particular function working, or wondering "why it's done that".

It's something the computer hardware and software companies worked out a long time ago: you can cut down the number of support staff you need if you only build a genuinely helpful "help" function into your products. The best ones will take you through a step-by-step routine of "Try this – did that help?" and eventually lead you to a solution; even the worst will take you through a number of possibilities before suggesting you "contact your network administrator" or something similar. Not handy when it's your home computer, making *you* the admin, and you haven't got a clue – but at least they try.

Now, it seems, audio-visual companies are beginning to see the light: I was delighted at the recent Denon/Marantz product launch to hear that most of the companies' new products will not only come without a huge manual in minute print in the box, instead having the "paperwork" provided on a CD-ROM, but will also adopt a "wizard" approach to set-up, leading the consumer through every aspect of the configuration of the product using on-screen pages complete with pictures.

That may not seem like rocket science, but having spent too much time helping consumers on telephone helplines in the past, and internet ones more recently, I can both appreciate the benefit of being able to show on the screen what the plug required looks like, and where to plug it in, and applaud the two companies for having invested in the development of this approach to system configuration.

Maybe this is the start of something big: I certainly hope so. Not only is there the "green" advantage of not having to use paper to print instruction books – which it seems hardly any consumers bother to read – there's also the fuel saving in shipping all those thick, heavy instruction books around the world.

After all, let's say the average multilingual manual for an AV receiver weighs something over 500g, and possibly nearer 1kg: remove those from the boxes and for every 1000 or so receivers you ship, that's a tonne of freight saved. On the average receiver weighing 15kg, that's a 10 per cent saving.

More to the point is that the consumer, provided he or she patiently follows the set-up walk-through, will not only stand a very good chance of getting the product to work correctly and optimally first time, but will also gain a better understanding of what does what, and be better equipped to solve problems if they occur.

No more staring blankly at the complex array of sockets, or stabbing hopefully at buttons: as products have added functionality they have of necessity become more complex, moving a long way beyond the intuitive "interconnects from CD to amplifier, speaker wire from amplifier to speakers", but for many years the task of explaining the product has lagged way behind the ingenuity of the engineers developing it.

Now, at last, it's catch-up time. ●

Infidelities Andrew Everard

Streaming music: who's minding the storage?

Having spent much of the past couple of years ripping music to hard drive, buying and downloading music online and playing it via a wide variety of streaming devices, of which the Cyrus Streamline reviewed this month is the latest, I've found myself getting paranoid about a couple of things.

One is the rapidly diminishing amount of space left on my network storage device – a few hundred gigabytes seems a lot, but the number has been decreasing fast – and the other is the safety of all the music I have stored. Yes, I have a back-up drive connected to my NAS, and yes, I have all the original CDs I have ripped, but the idea of having to rip everything again should the unthinkable happen is enough to cause sleepless nights.

So I have been forced to bite the bullet and upgrade the storage, from the 1TB device I once thought would be adequate for testing to a unit running two 2TB drives, each backing the other up. See what I mean about paranoid?

By the time you read this, I should have completed the process of transferring all the music between the two drives, which I suspect is going to take quite a while, along with some tidying and housekeeping to remove duplicate files, audio I will never listen to again and so on. But right now I'm sitting here looking at a couple of packages containing a NAS housing and a couple of hard drives with some trepidation!

Moral of story? If you're thinking of setting up a streaming music solution, work out how much storage space you'll ever need – then double it before you buy. It'll save a world of pain somewhere down the line.

Andrew Everard
Audio Editor

'Work out how much storage space you'll need, then double it'



CYRUS STREAMLINE

Compact network system joins the streaming fray

Cyrus becomes the latest to launch streaming music products: **Andrew Everard** checks out its all-in-one unit

Walking around the annual High End Show in Munich, even the most casual visitor could have been in no doubt that the audio landscape is changing. While some exhibits were still sourcing music from CD, more were playing their demonstration tracks from computers or network storage devices, and tablet computers were in control of many rooms.

Computer-stored music isn't the future of home audio: it's the here and now, and just about every company is embracing it. As indeed are these pages: we've come a long way from files stored as low-bitrate MP3s and now have systems able to equal – and in some cases better – the performance of CD.

British company Cyrus is one of the latest arrivals on the streaming scene: not content with launching a network-capable product, it's made life hard for itself by introducing three units, all designed to access music stored on a home computer or network or local storage, along with internet radio.

It's also adopted a two-way radio-frequency control system rather than the control applications – or "apps" – on third-party devices chosen by most of its rivals. Where the majority of streaming devices require you either to peer across the room while handling a conventional remote control, or invest in an Apple iOS or Google Android device with a control app, the Cyrus units come complete with what the company calls the n-remote.

This device, docked on a charging station when not in use, uses 2.4GHz radio

communication with the Cyrus streamers rather than infrared, so doesn't have to be in line of sight, has two-way feedback of information so you can see what the unit's playing on the handset's colour display, and will control other devices either via the Cyrus MCBus control system, or directly via infrared and learning capability.

The three Cyrus models have similar features but significant differences: common across the range is wired or wireless networking (Cyrus recommending wired for the most stable results), UPnP and DLNA compatibility, and a USB input for the connection of local music storage – a USB stick or an external hard-drive – or an iPod, iPhone or iPad, from which the unit will take music digitally. All three models will accept WAV, FLAC, AIFF, AAC, MP3 and WMA files, at resolutions up to 96kHz/24-bit where the formats support them, and have three electrical and two optical digital inputs.

Beyond that, the models diverge: the Stream X, at £1400, has only digital output and is designed to be used with a standalone DAC or an amp with digital input. At the other end of the range sits the £2000 Stream XP, with onboard digital conversion, fixed or variable analogue outputs – so it could be used straight into power amplification – and the option of upgrading with a Cyrus PSX-R.

THE TEST MUSIC



SCHUBERT

Symphony No 9, etc.
Budapest Festival Orch / Fischer
Channel Classics
CCSSA31111

A fine recording, with beautiful instrumental tone to probe the limits of the Streamline's abilities.



Between these fits the model we have here, the £1600 Streamline: this model has built-in power amplification delivering 2x30W and can be connected straight to loudspeakers.

PERFORMANCE

Slimline and compact the Streamline may be, in the usual Cyrus "upside down" cast casework, but it's not without competition at this price level. The obvious rivals are Arcam's Solo Neo, at £1350 including a DAB/FM tuner and a CD transport, both of which are missing from the Cyrus, and the Naim UnitiQute, which sells for £1425 and has DAB/FM radio and an analogue input but fewer digital inputs than the Cyrus. The Arcam is a little long in the tooth now but the Naim certainly offers a real challenge to the Cyrus newcomer.

In use, the Streamline is relatively simple to set up, at least once the n-remote handset is charged on its base-station and "paired" with

FREE ANALYSIS PLUS
interconnects and cables
with all complete
Bel Canto + Eclipse TD
hi-fi systems



Choose to buy a new hi-fi system with **BEL CANTO** components playing through a pair of **ECLIPSE TD** loudspeakers from AudioLincs and you'll enjoy music reproduction that fully releases the potential of your favourite recordings.

What's more, your new system will feature interconnects and loudspeaker cables (up to 3mtrs), from musicians' and recording engineers' favourites **ANALYSIS PLUS**, which we're including **FREE OF CHARGE** with every system.

For example, consider the **BEL CANTO CD2** CD Player with its matching **CSi** amplifier/DAC which provides 60wpc and inputs for all modern source types. Add a pair of **ECLIPSE TD510** speakers, chosen by many renowned musicians, and you'll be sharing their experience of beautiful music reproduction.

Please phone for information or check our website for full details. We'll happily consider part-exchange enquiries and a helpful installation service is possible.

audiolincs.com
Tel: 01476 591090



the main unit. That handset is excellent and is going to prove crucial: the display on the Streamline is a nasty black-on-green affair, and hard to read even from a modest distance.

Less convenient is the location of the USB socket for iPod/hard drive/memory key connection: it's on the rear panel, so really the only solution is to have a spare lead for your device permanently connected and run round to the side or front of the Cyrus. Even less fathomable is that the headphone socket, in this case a 3.5mm stereo type, is also on the rear panel. I'm afraid the logic of that escapes me totally.

Finally, it's worth noting that the speaker connections are on the BFA safety type sockets, for which four plugs are provided in the box. Conventional banana plugs can't be connected to the unit: if you have cables so terminated, it's easy to cut down the Cyrus plugs and use them as adapters.

As an aside, I noted that, when I scrolled through the recommended internet radio stations, I found well up the list – not too far behind Schleswig-Holstein Radio – Spire FM, the local station for Salisbury, where of course Naim is based! Perhaps a Cambridge station would be more appropriate...?

The sound here will be familiar to those acquainted with other Cyrus components: dull it isn't, and while there's plenty of pace and drive to the sound, some caution will be needed when it comes to choosing partnering speakers if the presentation isn't to become somewhat wearing, especially at higher volumes. Loudspeakers with a smooth, rich sound will tame things down a bit. The sonic signature of the system is at its most extreme when new; after some extended use, things calm down a little, and there's some mellowing of that top end.

There's no denying that with a clean, crisp recording the Cyrus can sound truly thrilling, but too often it teeters on the edge of brashness and there's a sense of lack of substance in the lower frequencies. Strings

can sound a trifle glassy, orchestral textures a bit bleached and lacking in warmth. That's the case across the range of sources and bitrates, but the Cyrus does sound best when playing at CD quality and above: its presentation tends to emphasise the effect of hefty bitrate-reduction.

However, for the classical listener wishing to store and play back discs there's a greater problem with the Streamline: as it stands at the moment, it doesn't do gapless playback. As a result, works with an entire section split over several tracks – an act of an opera, for example – can exhibit momentary gaps of a second or two, sometimes in the most inappropriate places.

True, the Cyrus isn't the only streaming client to suffer from this problem, and I am sure it's something the company can address in a future firmware upgrade, as others have. Similarly, the lack of a DAB/FM tuner may become less of a drawback if and when more stations are available as high-bitrate internet streams, although this may prove a problem for those on data-capped broadband tariffs.

However, for the moment, although the Streamline is impressive at what it does well, its remote control a delight to use and its compact size appealing, too many niggles hold it back from firm recommendation. Ⓢ

CYRUS STREAMLINE

Type Network music system

Price £1600

Sources UPnP/DLNA streaming, internet radio, local playback from iPod/iPhone/iPad and USB devices

Formats played WAV, FLAC, AIFF, AAC, MP3 and WMA

Inputs 3 electrical and 2 optical digital, USB, Ethernet, Wi-Fi

Audio outputs Fixed and variable analogue, electrical digital, one pair of speakers, headphones

Accessories supplied n-remote handset, Wi-Fi antenna, Ethernet cable, speaker plugs

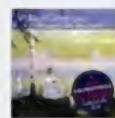
Made by Cyrus Audio Ltd, Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE29 6XY

Tel +44 (0)1480 410900

www.cyrusaudio.com

SUPER AUDIO CORNER

A closer look at, and listen to, some recent high-definition recordings



SOR

Le Calme: Late Works
William Carter (gtr)

Linn Ⓢ CD, CKD380

The follow-up disc to Carter's set of Spanish composer and virtuoso Fernando Sor's early works is available both as a hybrid SACD (offering DSD 51-channel or stereo, plus CD-quality with HDCD) and in a variety of download formats.

It's a beautifully simple and uncluttered recording. There's a close focus on the solo instrument and the guitarist's technique, and the 51-channel version benefits from the extra space and sense of acoustic. The intricacies of the playing are wonderfully captured and the result is delicacy and concentration, making this just about as near-perfect a recording as I've heard.



BRITTEN

Billy Budd

Soloists: Glyndebourne Chorus;
London Philharmonic Orchestra
/ Sir Mark Elder

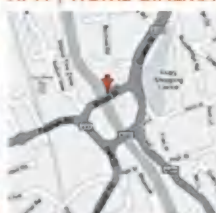
Opus Arte Ⓢ OABD7086D

I could do without the opening titles "swimming" towards the viewer as if being revealed from under water. It's an unnecessary bit of *Finding Nemo* in what is an atmospheric, even claustrophobic, account of Britten's naval thriller.

The picture quality is exemplary, from the opening close-ups to the remarkable solidity of the "below decks" scenes, and the sound matches up to the sharpness and tonal range of the video. There's a choice of LPCM stereo or dramatic DTS-HD Master Audio surround and both have impressive weight, sparkle and clarity.



HI-FI | HOME CINEMA | AUTOMATED SOLUTIONS



Visit our dedicated demonstration rooms; opening times are as follows:

Monday	-	9:00am to 6:00pm
Tuesday	-	9:00am to 6:00pm
Wednesday	-	9:00am to 6:00pm
Thursday	-	9:00am to 6:00pm
Friday	-	9:00am to 6:00pm
Saturday	-	9:00am to 6:00pm
Sunday	-	CLOSED

Nearest car park facilities can be found off Bedford Road, Guildford.



WHEN IT COMES TO CHOOSING HI-FI & HOME CINEMA, WHAT MAKES PJ HI-FI SO DIFFERENT? ▶ ▶ ▶

Based conveniently in central Guildford, PJ Hi-Fi has specialised in the demonstration, provision and installation of quality hi-fi and home cinema for over 20 years. Our dedicated demonstration rooms allow you to listen in comfort to a range of exceptional products, whilst our friendly and knowledgeable staff are always on hand to answer any questions you may have. Whether you are looking for your first genuine hi-fi system, want to create a bespoke home cinema or wish to distribute music and movies throughout your house, PJ Hi-Fi can provide a solution to suit all budgets, tastes and criteria.

As a truly independent retailer we are proud to say that we hand select, test and source all the products that we supply, ensuring a consistent standard of quality and reliability over our entire range of equipment. We believe that products should not only look and sound superb, they should represent the best the market has to offer at their respective prices and offer true value for money.

Drop in today to discuss your requirements or phone / email us to book a demonstration.

3 Bridge Street | Guildford | Surrey GU1 4RY | Tel: 01483 504801 | Email: info@pjhi-fi.co.uk | www.pjhi-fi.co.uk | The only real hi-fi shop in Guildford

BIRMINGHAM

MusicMatters



OPEN TUES - SAT 10:00 - 5:30

Interest free credit on selected items • 0% APR
Written details on request • Licensed credit broker

Home trials are available for many products

We offer custom installation of complete systems integrating hi-fi, home cinema, multi-room and lighting.

www.musicmatters.co.uk

Our extensive range of products include

- Arcam • Apollo • Anthem • Atacama • Atlas • Base
- Bose available at Solihull, Stratford, Stafford & Leamington
- Bowers & Wilkins (Nautilus Diamond available at Edgebaston & Solihull) • Chord Company
- Chord Electronics • Denon • Dynaudio
- Dynavector • Epos • Grado • Infocus • JVC Projectors
- KEF • Marantz • Meridian • Michell • Mission • MJ Acoustics
- Monitor Audio • Musical Fidelity • NAD • Naim • Nordost
- Ortofon • Panasonic • Pioneer • PMC • Project • Pure
- QED • Quad • Rega • REL • Roberts • Rotel
- Sennheiser • Sim2 • SME • Spondor • Sunfire • Tascam
- Teac • Wharfedale • Wilson Benesch • Yamaha

• **EDGBASTON**
361 Hagley Road,
Birmingham B17 8DL
0121 429 2811

• **SOLIHULL**
93-95 Hobs Moat Road,
West Midlands B91 8JL
0121 742 0234

• **STRATFORD-UPON-AVON**
18A Chapel Street,
CV37 4DP
01789 414333

• **HATCH END**
344 Uxbridge Road
Pinner, Middlesex
HA5 4HR
020 8420 1925

• **STOURBRIDGE**
9 Market Street,
West Midlands
DY8 1AB
01384 444 184

• **LEAMINGTON SPA**
23a Regent Street
Warwickshire
CV32 5EJ
01926 888 644

• **DARLINGTON**
17 Coniscliffe Road
County Durham DL3 7EE
01325 481 418

• **SUTTON COLDFIELD**
18 Baldmore Road,
West Midlands B73 5YD
0121 354 2311

• **STAFFORD**
114 Waverhampton Road
Staffordshire ST17 4AH
01785 358 214



LONDON

020 7226 5500
www.grahams.co.uk



"One of the five best hi-fi shops in the world"

ARENA Magazine

Grahams Hi-Fi
Canonbury Yard
190a New North Road
London N1 7BS

SOUTH

mike manning audio

Naim Audio - Rega - Roksan - Rotel
Densen - Dynavector - Moon - Nad
Onkyo - Audion(valve) - HarmanKardon
B&W - Focal(JMlab) - Spondor - Tannoy
Definitive Technology - M&K - Velodyne
Projekt - Well Tempered - Chord - QED
Music Works - Abbey Road Cables etc
HOME CONSULTATIONS - CUSTOM INSTALLS

15 YEARS CRAFTING IN SOMERSET
www.mikemanningaudio.com
9 Silver Street
Yeovil, Somerset
BA20 1BW
01935-479361

AUDIO ACCESSORIES

the solution

Loud Too Loud Way Too Loud

Excess gain in a system is a common problem, but it can be cured using Rothwell In-Line Attenuators. 1000's of satisfied customers worldwide.

the solution

"this accessory is heartily recommended" Gramophone

£39/pair

01204 366133 www.rothwellaudioproducts.co.uk

LONDON

Oranges & Lemons

www.orangesandlemons.info

Audio-Visual
Hi-Fi
Multi-Room

020 7924 2040
61-63 Webbs Road London SW11
shop@orangesandlemons.info



EAST YORKSHIRE

the audio room

audiolab • B&W • classe • denon
• linn • loewe • meridian • naim • panasonic •
pmc • proac • quad • rega • rotel

2 George Street, Hedon, Hull 38 St. Augustines Gate, Hedon, Hull
HU12 8JH tel: 01482 891375 HU12 8EX tel: 01482 896166

www.theaudioroom.co.uk

SOUTH WEST



senso
SYSTEMS

High Quality Hi-Fi
and Home Cinema
in Cornwall

Telephone (01872) 273215

16 / 17 Norfolk House, Lemon Street, Truro. TR1 2LS

www.senso-systems.co.uk

SUSSEX



**“...so good I swear it is
surrounded by magic”**

- Noel Keywood - Hi Fi World

Our award winning Hi Fi products are
handmade in the UK and let you hear your
music the way it was recorded

Please contact us to arrange a demonstration of a
complete music system in your own home

www.mfaudio.co.uk :: info@mfaudio.co.uk :: +44 (0) 1424 858260

 music first audio

OXFORDSHIRE

micromega

An old friend once again returns to these shores with a new range of exciting CD players & amplifiers, whose unrivalled quality-price ratio and performance easily exceed its competitors in most respects. Micromega - for the music lover whose requirement for quality and value equals only their passion for music.



sonus faber

A brand new speaker range from Sonus Faber, named the LUTO collection, beautifully crafted in piano black or walnut finish; one floor-stander, one stand-mount speaker and a multi-purpose centre/rear speaker. Exceptional value for money, exceptional musicality and Sonus faber works beautifully with Micromega.



We specialise in happy Hi-Fi customers
...why not call us today to find out more.

t: 01865 790 879
www.oxfordaudio.co.uk



AUDIOLAB 8200A

Refined design keeps a classic on the pace

The latest Audiolab integrated amplifier may look familiar, but it benefits from thorough upgrades, says **James Vesey**

Although it's changed hands a couple of times, the Audiolab brand is largely unchanged from its origins back in the 1980s. The founders of the original company met at university, and decided to produce hi-fi products as easy to use as they were affordable: their first product was the 8000A, a simple, flexible amplifier with real-world power and user-friendly features.

It sold for £400, had separate record and listen selectors and tone controls bypassable at the push of a button, and while some felt it had a somewhat dry sound, its ability to give a highly explicit presentation, with a highly detailed soundstage, was never in question.

The 8200A stereo amplifier, made by current owner IAG at its massive complex in Shenzhen, China, looks very much like past Audiolabs: it has record and listen selectors, plus a mode selector allowing a range of extra functionality, but it's basically a simple stereo amplifier. Three line inputs, three tape loops, speaker terminals, a volume control and 2x60W output – that's all you

get. Well, almost: the amplifier also has two sets of preamplifier-level outputs – to connect to external power amplifiers – and direct inputs to its power amp section.

How these function is controlled by that mode selector: in various combinations it allows the preamp and power amp to be connected or disconnected internally, the preamp out and power amp input connections to be enabled or switched off, and the speaker output to be muted.

What all that means is that it's easy to use this integrated amplifier with an external surround processor, as a preamplifier, or with external power amps to biampify suitable speakers: it's all very Audiolab.

New is a chassis reworked for greater stiffness and isolation, and improvements to the entire signal path, from the layout and components to the power supply and controls. According to Audiolab, the intention was that: "The new circuitry, chassis, components and all the technical refinements increase consistency, stability and the feel of the product, but playing music in a more involving and enjoyable way was the goal."

PERFORMANCE

Way back when, the stereotypical view of Audiolab and its rival Arcam was that you should go for the former if you wanted an "upfront" sound, and the latter if you preferred your music lush and warm. Both stereotypes were overplayed and overstated, but the fact remains that even in its latest form the Audiolab doesn't exactly suffer fools gladly.



This open, fresh-sounding amplifier is highly revealing of the source components with which it's used, and despite an apparently modest output it has enough power and grip to drive and control a wide range of speakers. What it isn't is hard-edged, brash or brittle, but then neither does it warm up the music or smooth off recordings with excessive brightness.

In fact, this is one of the most neutral amplifiers you can buy for this sort of money, and partnered with high-quality sources – the 8200CD player is an obvious choice – and a good pair of speakers, for which you should budget at least £500, it's capable of delivering music with a directness that's at once rather "old school" and very refreshing.

There's a definite sense of the amplifier getting out of the way of the music and letting the rest of the system show what it can do, much more than which you can't really ask of a product such as this: it doesn't impose any character of its own, and the sense of effortless power and solid control means it doesn't harden up when asked to work hard, as well as being – at least on a purely subjective level – impressive from so compact an amplifier.

The Audiolab amplifiers have always been slimline, functional and capable of a highly attractive performance; the latest addition to the range has merely refined those qualities, and kept the company on the pace in the specialist stereo amplifier market. **C**

AUDIOLAB 8200A

Type Stereo amplifier

Price £730

Inputs Three line, three tape, power amplifier input

Outputs Three tape, two sets of preamplifier outputs, one pair of speakers on twin sets of terminals

Power output 2x60W

Controls Record/listen selectors, pre/power amplifier mode, volume, power

Accessories supplied Remote handset

Made by International Audio Group, IAG House, Sovereign Court, Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 6XU

Tel +44 (0) 1480 447700

www.audiolab.co.uk

THE FUTURE OF HI-FI

NDX Network Player

Combining cutting-edge technology with audiophile sound quality, the NDX is the next generation of hi-fi.

This versatile digital player has three S/PDIF digital inputs, can play UPnP audio streams, Internet radio, USB-stored audio and allows playback from Apple devices.



Find out more about Naim's digital players at www.naimaudio.com/on_stream



Escape and Unwind with the Ultimate Collection of Relaxing Guitar Music



"The must-have
CD of the summer"
CLASSIC *f*M

Craig Ogden *Summertime*

The Brand New Album from
the Number 1 Guitarist

*Includes Classical Favourites
Cavatina, Gymnopedie No. 1,
Summertime, Pavane and
many more*

Out Now

on CD & Download

classicfm.com/craigogden

Try out the
new mobile sheet
music library for free!
Visit m.pianostreet.com
on your mobile phone

pianostreet.com

- the website for pianists, teachers,
students and piano enthusiasts

Piano Street



Latest piano news



E-books on piano technique



Autograph manuscripts



Recordings of easy/intermediate
and famous piano pieces



Piano Forum - full of valuable
information, knowledge,
fun and friendship



Thousands of
classical piano
scores to
download and
print or to view
on your mobile
device



The best compact wheelchair car converted by Brotherwoods



Travel beside the driver in a Brotherwood FIAT Multipla

For more details on NEW and refurbished previously owned FIAT Multiplas ring:

0844 308 0913

*Also we have a comprehensive range of New and Used Wheelchair Cars
available to view on www.brotherwood.com*

BROTHERWOOD
Automobility Limited

Beer Hackett, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6QP



Motability

The leading car scheme for disabled people

RECORDS WANTED

revolutions

records and cds

*Run by musicians
for music lovers*

For prompt attention, contact:

Darran Laine, BA (hons) or Dr Matthew Pollard
Revolutions, 1st Floor 67 Victoria Road,
Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1UN
email: info@revolutions33.co.uk



We buy classical LPs
From 1950s - 1970s

We will travel to anywhere in the UK to view
sizeable collections or can buy by post from your
lists. Quality hi-fi equipment purchased -
EMT - GARRARD - TANNOY - THORENS Etc.

CD Collections also purchased

Tel: 01903 209553

www.revolutions33.co.uk

Classical CD collections bought. Can collect/ deal by post. Website:
www.esmetronrecords.com Please e-mail esmetronrecords@btinternet.com

Any old interesting valve amplifiers, Tannoy speakers, Garrard 301,
401 or Linn turntables etc. LP's also bought. Tel: 01986 895929.
Email: nick@emporiumhifi.demon.co.uk

Any 16 r.p.m records (except religious) bought. Claus Fischer,
Taagerupvej 15, DK - 6070, Christiansfeld, Denmark. Phone:
0045 29 10 17 78.

BUY • SELL • TRADE

vinyl • CDs • DVDs • box sets

nothing legal refused! (ID required)

CLASSICAL MUSIC EXCHANGE

36 Notting Hill Gate, London W11, open 7 days 10am - 8pm

www.mveshops.co.uk



020 7229 3219



SALE STARTS
SATURDAY 16TH JULY



Harold Moores Records Ltd

London's finest specialist
Classical and Jazz store.

Visit us for a wide range of CDs and LPs.

2 Great Marlborough St
London W1F 7HQ

Email: sales@hmrecords.co.uk

Website: www.hmrecords.co.uk

Tel: 0207 437 1576

For details
on how to
advertise
in this
section call

020 8267 5976

GRAMOPHONE

TOP PRICES PAID

LP COLLECTIONS
1950-1975

Will Collect

email: j_r_lowe@hotmail.com

TELEPHONE
01333 311949



WANTED!

LP AND HI-FI COLLECTIONS
FROM THE 1950s AND 1960s

LARGE CD COLLECTIONS
ALWAYS CONSIDERED

EMAIL
watson207@btinternet.com

TELEPHONE
0113 2534010

www.watsonrecords.co.uk

RECORDS FOR SALE



For a huge selection of CDs and an efficient mail order service that guarantees fast, reliable access to the music you require. Call Banks Music on **01904 658836**. If we haven't got what you want, we can almost certainly find it for you.

Banks Music
The Complete Music Retailer
18 Lendal, York, YO1 8AU
email sales@banksmusic.co.uk

Oriel Opera Archives
"Preserving Our Opera Heritage"
British Opera performances from 50 years ago on CD - mostly in English
Now carefully restored.

Great Performances! Great Singing! Great Sound!

Catalogue and free sample CD available from:
Oriel Music Trust,
79 Florid Glyder, Port Dinowic, Gwynedd LL56 4QX.
orielmusic@aol.com **01248 670 797**



SCHOPPER AG
(Switzerland)

The best partner for your Thorens TD 124 !
Restorations & Parts

www.thorens-td124.ch

SEVENOAKS
Classical Compact Discs and DVDs
The Compact Disc Shop
57 London Road, Sevenoaks. 01732 740 889
martin@bluesandjazz.co.uk

- A wide range of new releases and back catalogue in stock.
- All Labels - All distributors - Both large and small.
- Full title and artist identification service.

MAIL ORDER

Is now a major part of our business. We offer a prompt and efficient delivery usually within 2/3 days.

GIVE US A RING AND TRY OUR SERVICE

- We also stock Jazz, Blues, World music and talking books etc.



THE CLASSICAL CD EXCHANGE

Visit our specialist website devoted to second-hand classical CDs and DVDs, including many rare and deleted titles. The site offers up to 15,000 titles with the music of over 1,000 composers. All CDs guaranteed. We sell, we buy, we exchange.

www.classicalcdexchange.co.uk
Tel: **01392 824721**
Unit 5, GD Units, Cofton Road, Exeter, EX2 8QW

KERNOW CLASSICS
www.kernowclassics.co.uk

Collectable and rare classical LPs from the 1950s-1970s available for sale worldwide.
Musical Consultancy also available.

Email: enquiries@kernowclassics.co.uk
Tel: (+44) 01726 879059
Mob: 07989 398782

Gramex
& Jazz @ Gramex
The best used classical record and CD shop in Europe

Thousands of classical and jazz CDs, DVDs and 78s in stock including rarities and deletions.

Best prices paid for recordings in perfect condition


Open 11am to 7pm Monday to Saturday at
25 Lower Marsh, London, SE1 7RJ
(Adjacent to Waterloo Station)
Tel: 020 7401 3830
E-mail: gramex@btconnect.com



SPIRAL CLASSICS
Fine Quality Classical LPs

SXL * SAX * ASD * SB * AMS etc
Original labels & pressings * Early mono & stereo
Mail Order * Worldwide

52 Herbert Street, Loughborough, LE11 1NX
Tel +44(0)1509 557846 Fax +44(0)1509 557847
www.spiralclassics.co.uk * sophia@spiralclassics.co.uk



Yarborough House
Bookshop & Coffee House

1000 LPs & 4,000 CDs Rapidly Changing Stock.
Much unusual repertoire. All guaranteed.
Large secondhand general book stock.

We buy interesting LPs and CDs and quality books, particularly music, philosophy and literature.
Will collect or pay postage.

Open 5 days 10-5.00 closed Mon & Wed
THE SQUARE, BISHOPS CASTLE
SHROPSHIRE SY9 5BN
TEL: **01588638318**
Email: mail@yarboroughhouse.com

SAX 2329 original pressing of Kogan playing Laio, seeking offers around £2,400. Cell: 07850 006429

BOOKS

www.mahlersheavenlyretreats.com
Book, DVD/CD+ Mahler's London
Tel 02074039141
PO Box 56376, London, SE12SQ

BOOKFINDING SERVICE
Out-of-print titles. All subjects. Also music, records & CDs. Books are mailed overseas.

Barlow Moor Books
29 Churchwood Road
Didsbury, Manchester M20 6TZ
Telephone: **0161 434 5073**
Email: books@barlowmoorbooks.co.uk

AUTHORS

Please submit synopsis plus 3 sample chapters for consideration to:

Olympia Publishers
60 Cannon St,
London, EC4N 6NP
www.olympiapublishers.com

RECORDS WANTED

THE RECORD SHOP

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SELL YOUR VINYL COLLECTION, OR CD COLLECTION, PLEASE CALL 01424 846 581. TOP PRICES, AS ALWAYS.

EAST SUSSEX LATEST RECORD & CD SHOP:
THE RECORD SHOP, 6 COODEN SEA ROAD,
LITTLE COMMON, BEXHILL ON SEA, TN39 4SL.

AZALEA CLASSICS

Classical (Jazz) CDs wanted. Will visit and collect good or large collection & pay TOP prices. Reviewers welcome.

Tel: **02073801188**
Email: winterfire168@gmail.com



WANTED
Collections of Classical
CDs * DVDs * LP Records

Cash paid ~ fast pick-up ~ call for quote
0115 8080210 ~ mobile 07539 831066
email: sales@classicalcabin.co.uk
Nottingham, UK

Ben's Collectors Records
Next Guildford Record Fair Sat 24.09.11

5 Tunsgate, Guildford
Surrey, GU1 3QT

Email: ben@bensrecords.com
Tel: **(01483) 301165**

Classical, jazz and pop.
Records, CD's and DVD's bought and sold

Private collector seeks 78s of opera singers. High prices paid. Tel: (0044) 01245 441 661.

Wanted - Vinyl LP record and CD collections and Hi-Fi turntables, amps etc." Buyer can collect. Phone Geoff: 01525 237693 Bedfordshire. Email: classical_records@hotmail.com

SOCIETIES

British Music Society. Promoting the music of neglected British composers worldwide. Details: 7 Tudor Gardens, Upminster, Essex, RM14 3DE. e-mail: sct.bms1943@eldy.org

SPECIAL INTEREST

Micheline Ostermeyer (1922-2001) was the elegant French prize winning concert pianist who also won two gold and one bronze field event medals at the 1948 Wembley London Olympics. As a 14-year old I was there!

My internet enquiries suggest she made some commercial recordings (Scriabin's opus 8 and 12 is mentioned as being on CD).

Does anyone out there have firm information of any such recorded output by this most versatile lady, sufficient to justify my further enquiries? Thank you.

Derek Pearce
Tel: 01903 262459
Email: derek.pearce3@btopenworld.com

Gramophone Classical Music Guide 2012

New Releases Index

The latest releases on CD, SACD, DVD and Blu-ray

Key: ① Full price £11 and over ② Medium price £8 - £10.99 ③ Budget price £6 - £7.99 ④ Super-budget price £5.99 and below ⑤ Reissue ⑥ Historic ⑦ SACD ⑧ DVD/Video ⑨ Blu-ray

COMPACT DISC

ABC CLASSICS

www.shop.abc.net.au

Brahms Pf Trios. *Macquarie Trio/Milton/Goldschlager/Selby.* ② ABC476 4318

Edwards Heart of Night. *Melbourne SO/Volmer.* ② ABC476 3768

Elgar Orch Wks. *Various orchs/Heinze/Stanhope/Measham/Thomas.* ② ABC476 4325

Rachmaninov Pf Concs Nos 1 & 2. *Libantsev/Cheon/Sydney SO/Furst.* ② ABC 476 4330

Various Cpsrs Scotland the Brave. *Queensland Pops Orch & Cb/O'Boyle.* ② ABC 476 4130

Various Cpsrs Serious Songs. *Rhodes/Cbong/Tasmanian SO/Melbourne SO/Lessing/Fritzsche.* ② ABC 476 4363

ANALEKTA

www.analekta.com

Haydn Six Pf Sons. *Kuerti.* ② AN2 9933

AUDITE

www.audite.de

Various Cpsrs French Music for Hn & Pf. *Pellarin/Locato.* ② AUDITE97 538

AVIE

www.avie-records.com

Gál. Schumann Sym No 3. *Orch of the Swan/Woods.* ② AV2230

Mahler Das Lied von der Erde. *Manchester Camerata/Boyd.* ② AV2195

Rachmaninov Pf Concs Nos 1 & 3. *Trpěški/RLPO/Petrénko.* ② AV2191

Various Cpsrs Conversazione I: Cantatas from a Cardinal's Court. *Radley/Sounds Baroque/Perkins.* ② AV2197

Various Cpsrs Come to the River. *Apollo's Fire/Sorrell.* ② AV2205

Vivaldi The French Connection 2. *Bircher/La Serenissima/Candler.* ② AV2218

BERLIN CLASSICS

www.edel.com/en/home

Various Cpsrs Famous Ovs. *Various artists.* ③ 0300249BC

Various Cpsrs Popular Arias. *Various artists.* ③ 0300250BC

Various Cpsrs Operetta Collection. *Various artists.* ③ 0300251BC

BNL

www.codaex.com

Brahms Pf Trios. *Trio Eszterházy.* ② BNL112966

CAPRICCIO

www.naxos.com/labels/capriccio-cd

Bach, J.L. Choral Wks. *Rheinische Kantorei/Das Kleine Konzert/Max.* ③ CAP5080

Schein, J.H. The Fountain of Israel. *Reinische Kantorei/Max.* ② CAP5069

Various Cpsrs 150 German Folk Songs. *Dresden Kreuzchor/Thomanerchor Leipzig/Prey/Schreiber.* ⑤ CAP 7106

CARUS

www.carus-verlag.com

Frommelt. Hanselmann. Schädler Orch Wks. *Pf Duo Hansehlmann/Liebtenstein SO/Masfeld.* ② CARUS83 364

Herzogenberg Wie schön, hier zu verträumen. *Deckert/Eittinger/Weller/Cantissimo Ens/Utz.* ② CARUS83 451

Various Cpsrs Kinder des Monsieur Mathieu. *Stuttgart St Op Children's Ch/Knecht.* ② CARUS83 456

C-AVI

www.avi-music.de

Brahms. Schumann Va Son, Op 120 No 1. *Roberts, R/Vogt.* ② AVI8553181

Puccini Fanciulla del West. *Desti/Armiliato/Cita Lyrica Ch & Orch/Veronesi.* ② AVI8553212

CHANDOS

www.chandos.net

Bartók Vn Concs. Va Conc. *Ebnes/BBC PO/Naseda.* ② CHAN10690

Haydn Pf Sons, Vol 3. *Bavouzet.* ② CHAN10689

Lutosławski Voc Wks. *Crowe/Spence/Purves/BBC SO/Gardner.* ② CHAN10688

Various Cpsrs 17th-Century Sacred Wks. *Gonzaga Band.* ② CHAN0782

Wagner Orch Wks (arr de Vlieger). *RSNO/K Järvi.* ② CHSA5092

COLUMNA MÚSICA

www.columnamusica.com

Gerhard Tonades des segles XVII & XVIII. *Herrera/McClure.* ② N67053

Guinjoan Sym Wks. *Barcelona SO/Bruckner Orch Linz/Columer/Russell Davies.* ② ICM0262

CRYSTAL CLASSICS

www.columnamusica.com

Rameau Zaïs. Hippolyte et Aricie. *L'Orfeo Baroque Orch/Gaigg.* ② N67063

Various Cpsrs Stg Trios. *Berlin Stg Trio.* ② N67053

DABRINGHAUS & GRIMM

www.mdg.de

Beethoven Septet. Sextet. *Consortium Classicum.* ② MDG301 0594

Brahms Pf Conc No 1. *Rittner/Arte del Mondo.* ② MDG904 1699

Mendelssohn Sym No 3 & 4 (rev version). *Musikkollegium Winterthur/Holliger.* ② MDG901 1663

DELPHIAN

www.delphianrecords.co.uk

Various Cpsrs Songbook: Tewkesbury Schola Cantorum. *Trebles of Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum/Nicholas.* ② DCD34097

Various Cpsrs Revenge of the Folksingers. *Conc Caledonia/Roberts/Cboney/Campbell/Moray.* ② DCD34108

ELOQUENCE

www.deccaclassics.com

Brahms. Schumann Songs. *Fischer-Dieskau/Meyer/Demus.* ② 480 3527

Various Cpsrs Russian Songbook. *Söderström/Askenazy.* ② 480 2067

Various Cpsrs Crespin in Recital. *Crespin/Wustman.* ② 480 2098

Various Cpsrs Art of Oda Slobodskaya. *Slobodskaya/Newton/LSO/Fistoulari.* ② 480 3524

Wagner Nilsson sings Wagner. *Nilsson.* ② 480 3550

GENUIN

www.genuin.de

Albéniz. Morera. Pedrell Homenaje a Albéniz. *Conc Malaga/Paris.* ② GEN10533

Bach, J.S. Biber Vn Sons. *Sviridov/Mikijanska.* ② GEN11207

Brindie. Brouwer. Takamitsu Soundscapes II. *Stegmann.* ② GEN11210

Racine Wks. *Various artists.* ② GEN 11206

GLOSSA

www.glossamusic.com

Desmarest Grands motets. *Concert Spirituel/Niquet.* ② GCDC81607

Handel Solo & Trio Sons. *Arcadia/Cremonesi.* ② GCDC80001

d'India Madrigals, Bk 1. *Veneziana/Cavina.* ② GCDC80602

Mozart Basset Hn Divertimenti. *Stadler Trio.* ② GCDC80602

Schmelzer Sons. *Ens Aurora/Gatti/Labyrinto/Pandolfo.* ② GCDC80003

Various Cpsrs Chansons au luth. *Ansermet/Cberici.* ② GCDC80002

Various Cpsrs Pièces pour théorbes français. *Morero.* ② GCDC80106

Various Cpsrs Canción del emperador. *Morero.* ② GCDC80108

GRAMOLA

www.gramola.at/de

Various Cpsrs Haydn...Out of Hainburg. *Holzappel/Dolce Rimanza/Wieninger.* ② GRAM98898

HÄNSSLER CLASSIC

www.haenssler-classic.de

Fauré Requiem. *Okamura/Wilson-Johnson/Ens Orchestral de Paris/Beck.* ② CD98 628

HARMONIA MUNDI

www.harmonimundi.com

Beethoven. Liszt. Schubert Pf Sons. *Lewis.* ② HMX290 8456/7

Boccherini La musica notturna di Madrid - Stg Qnts. *Cuarteto Casals.* ② HMC90 2092

Couperin Cpte Kybd Wks. *Egarr.* ④ HMU90 7511/4

Mendelssohn Double Conc for Pf & Vn. *Bezuidenbunt/Freiburg Baroque Orch/Von der Goltz.* ② HMC90 2082

Schubert. Schumann. Wolf Art of Lied. *Gura/Berner/Mayers/RIAS Chbr Ch/Creed/Schults.* ② HMX290 8460/61

Various Cpsrs Hunt Lieberman: A Tribute. *Hunt Lieberman/Freiburg Baroque Orch/Philb Baroque Orch/McGegan.* ② HMU90 7471/2

Various Cpsrs Voyage en France. *Thuraud/Bernold/Van Spaendonck.* ② HMX290 8450/51

Various Cpsrs Violoncelle romantique. *Bertrand/Amoyel.* ② HMX290 8452/3

Various Cpsrs Vn Sons & Concs. *Faust/Melnikov/Kupiec/Prague Philb/Bělohlávek.* ② HMX290 8454/5

Various Cpsrs The Voice 2. *Scholl/Martin/Guilmette/Academia Bizantina/Dantone/Collegium Vocale Orch/Hervezegbe.* ② HMX290 8458/9



The Crotchet Web Store

Dedicated to Classical Music, Jazz & Film Soundtracks. Search our on-line database & order securely.

www.crotchet.co.uk



CLASSICAL CD

SPECIALIST FRIENDLY SERVICE AT VERY LOW MAIL ORDER PRICES

AT OUR REFURBISHED LARGER SHOP

3/5HIGH PAVEMENT
NOTTINGHAM NG1 1HF
tel: 0115 948 3832

www.classicalcd.co.uk

HERALD AV

www.heraldav.co.uk

- Various Cpsrs** Byrd to Blow – The English Baroque Org.
Walker. (M) HAVP363
- Various Cpsrs** The Organ of Chichester Cathedral. Baldock.
(M) HAVP364

HERITAGE

www.allia-vox.com

- Bliss** Bliss conducts Bliss. LSO/LPO/Bliss. (M) HTGCD220
- Various Cpsrs** English Song. Bream/Britten/Pears.
(M) HTGCD224
- Walton** Walton conducts Walton. Philb Orch/Walton.
(M) HTGCD223

HORTUS

www.editionshortus.com

- Liszt** Readings. Starzy. (M) HOR088

LA MÀ DE GUIDO

www.lamadedeguido.com

- Martí i Cristia** Pf Wks. Blanch. (M) LM2102
- Ohana** Etudes d'interprétation. Pas. Santhibañez.
(M) LM24009

LAWO CLASSICS

www.lawo.no

- Gershwin** Gershwin at the Kybd. Waagaard. (M) LWC1021

L'ENCELADE

www.codedex.com

- Balbastre, Royer** Op Arias arr pf. Zimmer. (M) ECL 1001

MARIINSKY

www.mariinskylabell.com

- Donizetti** Lucia Di Lammermoor. Dessay/Becala/
Mariinsky Orchestra & Chorus /Gergiev. (F) (2) MAR0512

MELODIYA

www.melodiya.org

- Bach, JS. Khagagortyan. Yanchenko** Orch Wks.
Yanchenko. (M) MELCD10 01810
- Balakirev** Tamara Glazunov Oriental Rhapsody
Rimsky-Korsakov Antar. USSR St Academic SO/Svetlanov.
(M) MELCD10 01828
- Corelli. Mozart. Vivaldi** Chbr Wks. Spivakov/Sheinyuk/
Anikeyes/Turvisky/Dizhur. (M) MELCD10 01830
- Glinka** Pf Wks. Kamyshev. (M) MELCD10 01827
- Khachaturian** Sym No 1. Concerto-Rhapsody.
Shakhovskaya/USSR St SO/Khachaturian.
(M) MELCD 1001839

- Komitas** Patarag. Varshapetyan/Yerevan Op Male Chbr Cb/
Keshishyan/Asmeryan. (M) MELCD10 01844
- Prokofiev** Alexander Nevsky. Zdravitsa. Andreyeva/USSR
St Academic SO/Svetlanov/Yurlov/Ukbov. (M) MELCD10 01831

- Rimsky-Korsakov** Mlada. All-Union Rad Cb/Great SO/
Svetlanov. (F) (3) MELCD10 01829

- Rimsky-Korsakov** May Night. Lisovsky/Sapagina/USSR TV
& Rad Cb & Orch/Fedoseyev. (F) (2) MELCD10 01840

- Stravinsky** Fairy's Kiss. All-Union Rad & TV SO/
Rozhdenskiy. (M) MELCD10 01833

MIRARE

www.mirare.fr

- Bull. Tallis. Tomkins** Mr Tomkins his Lessons of Worth.
Guiller. (M) MIR137

MODE

www.moderecords.com

- Cage** Pere Wks, Vol 1. CCM Pere Ens/Cutley. (M) MODE229
- Scelsi** Wks for Va. Royer. (M) MODE231

MUSIC & ARTS

www.musicandarts.com

- Beethoven** Pf Concs Nos 1 & 5. Gieseking/Philb Orch/
Grosses Funk Orch/Kubelik. (M) MA1145
- Lowie** Blues and the Empirical Truth. Lowie/Ribot/Sutby/
Sikes/Hautala/Day/Reynolds. (F) (3) MA1251

MUSIÉPOCA

www.codedex.com

- Chemirani. López. Petrakis** Mavra Froudia – Black
Eyebrows. Petrakis/López/Chemirani. (M) MEPCD003
- Desmazures** Pièces de Simphonie. Suites I & III. Vespres
d'Arnadi. (M) MEPCD001

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FRYDERYK CHOPIN

www.en.chopin.nifc.pl

- Chopin** Pf Sons. Sbelley. (M) NTFCCD022
- Schumann** Etudes symphoniques. Pf Son No 2. Frager.
(M) NTFCCD100

NEOS

www.neos-music.com

- Kurtág** Complete Wks for String Qt. Athena Qt.
(F) NEOS11033

- Mahnkopf** Pynchon Cycle. Ens SurPlus/Cas/Veale/Avery.
(M) NEOS11036

- Quell** Chbr Wks. Ens Aventure. (M) NEOS11046

NEUKLANG

www.codedex.com

- Ping Machine** Des Trucs Pareils. Ping Machine.
(M) NCD4059

- Torque** Forward. Torque. (M) NCD4055

NEW WORLD

www.newworldrecords.org

- La Berge** Speak. La Berge/Myers. (M) 80717-2

OEHMS CLASSICS

www.oehmsclassics.de

- Chopin** 24 Préludes arr org. Rost/Gunther. (F) OC681

- Giuliani** Gtr Wks. Fernández. (M) OC401

- Mayr, G** La Lodoiska. Panzarella/Belfiore/Ovenden/Munich
Rad Orch/Petron. (F) (2) OC954

- Various Cpsrs** Britannic Organ, Vol 1. Runsey.
(M) (2) OC840

- Tchaikovsky** Sym No 6. German Rad PO, Saarbrücken &
Kaiserslautern/Poppen. (M) OC761

ORFEO

www.orfeo-international.de

- Various Cpsrs** Slavic Op Arias. Stoyanova/Munich Rad Orch/
Baleff. (M) C830 111A

PAN CLASSICS

www.harmoniamundi.com

- Falconieri** Canzonas, Syms & Fantasies. Ens Isabelle d'Este/
Mauvette. (M) PC10248

- Pasquini** Virtuoso Wks for Two Hpds. Crenonesi/
De Marchi. (M) PC10247

- Various Cpsrs** Frottole. Hofbauer/Modena Consort.
(M) PC10246

PENTATONE

www.pentatonemusic.com

- Brahms** Syms. Ovs. Leipzig Gewandhaus Orch/Massar.
(F) (3) PTC 5186 182

PHAEDRA

www.phaedracd.com

- Van Eyck** Rondom – Around. Arulalus Ens/Ketels.
(M) PH92068

- Various Cpsrs** La declinaison de la femme. Encantar.
(M) PH92069

PONDEROSA

www.ponderosa.it

- Various Cpsrs** Royal Albert Hall Concert, March 2010.
Einaudi. (M) (2) POND085

PREISER

www.phaedracd.com

- Various Cpsrs** Cerquetti – Vocal Portrait. Cerquetti.
(M) PR93479

RAUMKLANG

www.raumklang.de

- Various Cpsrs** Una musa plebea. Luchiarum. (M) RK2410

- Various Cpsrs** Rosenmond und Lindentraum – Songs of
Love and Life. Rembeck/Gliozzi. (M) RK3002

- Various Cpsrs** Nell'autunno di Bisanzio. Baka/Ex Silenzio/
Ensemble Arlys/Kountouras/Kyriakakis. (M) TAL90001

REGENT

www.regent-records.co.uk

- Leighton. MacMillan** Invocation – Chor Wks. Saint/
Birmingham Conservatoire Chbr Cb/Spicer. (F) REGCD348

REGIS

www.regisrecords.co.uk

- Rachmaninov** Pf Wks. Lill. (M) RRC1331

- Ravel** Pf Wks. Thibaudet. (M) RRC1339

- Various Cpsrs** Baroque Masterpieces for Hpds. Pinnock.
(M) RRC1332

- Various Cpsrs** 16th-Century Music for Viols. Fretwork &
Rose Consort of Viols. (M) RRC1333

- Various Cpsrs** The Songs of England. Various artists.
(M) RRC1337

- Various Cpsrs** Wks for Va da gamba. Knijken. (M) RRC1346

- Various Cpsrs** English Vn Sons. Stanzel. (M) RRC1376

- Various Cpsrs** Nursery Rhymes and Singing Games.
Various artists. (M) FRC6143

SFZ

www.sfmusic.co.uk

- Various Cpsrs** Contemporary British Org Wks, Vol 3.
Bonaventure. (M) SFZM0111

SIGNUM

www.signumrecords.com

- Parry** Songs of Farewell. Tenebrae/Sbort. (M) SIGCD211

- Various Cpsrs** Tide Harmonic. Rogé/London CO/Warren-
Green. (M) SIGCD211

- Various Cpsrs** Songs of Cricket. Cantabile/London Qt.
(M) SIGCD217

- Various Cpsrs** Org of Westminster Abbey. Quinney.
(M) SIGCD266

SOMM

www.somm-recordings.com

- Barber** Cpte Pf Wks. McCawley. (M) SOMM0108

STRADIVARIUS

www.somm-recordings.com

- Francesconi** Ballata. Beasley/Larson/Komlosi/La Monnaie Cb
& SO/Ona/Balsadonna. (F) (2) STR57012

- Sciarrino** Luci mie traditrici. Taramak/Miedl/Schneider/
Bode/Ens Algoritmo/Angius. (M) STR33900

- Shostakovich. Tchaikovsky** Pf Trios. David Trio.
(M) STR33861

TACET

www.tacet.de

- Bach, JS** French Stes. Ulbrich. (M) EIGEN10420

TUDOR

www.tudor.ch

- Chen, Q. Chopin. Xiaogang, Y** Pf Wks. Tan.
(M) TUDOR7157

WALHALL

www.priory.org.uk

- Ponchielli** Gioconda Puccini Madama Butterfly – Act 1.
Sals incl Udovich & Taddei/Teatro Colón Cb & Orch/Cilario/
Gbiune. (F) (3) WLCD0337

- Strauss, J** Fledermaus. Sals incl Kallman, Piazza & Thebom/
Metropolitan Op Cb & Orch/Ormandy. (M) (2) WLCD0332

- Verdi** Don Carlo. Sals incl Ottolini, Roberti & Bastianini/Chor
& Orch of RAI, Turin/Rossi. (M) (3) WLCD0336

WERGO

www.priory.org.uk

- Nancarrow** As Fast as Possible. Briggs/Bugallo/Karlen/
Williams/Larson/Ens Modern/De Roo/WDR SO, Cologne/
Asbury. (M) WER6733-2

DVD & BLU-RAY

ABC CLASSICS

www.shop.abc.net.au

- Various Cpsrs** Scotland the Brave. Queensland Pops Cb &
Orch/O'Boyle. (F) (2) ABC076 2795

PONDEROSA

www.ponderosa.it

- Various Cpsrs** Royal Albert Hall Concert – March 2010.
Einaudi. (M) (2) DVD POND03

TACET + TACET + TACET



Beware of Emotions !

Exciting CDs, LPs, SACDs and DVDs for
classical music lovers.
Pioneer Recordings, including TACET
Real Surround Sound and Moving Real
Surround Sound.

+ www.tacet.de + www.tacet.de + www.tacet.de +



Winner of the German
Music Critics Award !



The Specialists For Classical Music

Over 65,000 Titles Online
CDs | SACDs | DVDs | Blu-Ray

Concerts and workshops with

Nicolas Altstaedt, Julius Berger, Andreas Brantelid, Rebecca Carrington, Colin Carr, Alban Gerhardt, Natalia Gutman, Gary Hoffman, Maria Kliegel, Benedict Klöckner, Gidon Kremer, Kremerata Baltica, Jens Peter Maintz, Mischa Maisky, Dai Miyata, Arto Noras, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Eckart Runge, Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt, Gabriel Schwabe, Bonian Tian, István Várdai and others in Kronberg im Taunus and Frankfurt, Germany

Patron: Marta Casals Istomin



**KRONBERG
ACADEMY**

'Cello Perspectives' Cello Festival September 29 – October 3, 2011



Tickets and Information +49-6173-783377
www.kronbergacademy.de

Advertisers Index

A

Audiolincs 106

B

Bath Compact Discs PR88

Bow Brand 85

Bradford International Orchestral Season 98

Brennan JB7 124

C

Cadogan Hall 123

Classics Direct PR100

CS Bedford 18

D

Decca 6

Deutsche Grammophon 25

E

EFG Private Bank 22

EMI 2

H

Harrow School 100

Haute Ecole de Musique de Conservatoire de Lausanne 20

Hyperion 52

I

International Liszt Competition 100

K

Kirker Holidays 99

L

Linn Records 74

LSO Live 26

M

Malko Conducting Competition 100

Moritzburg Festival 71

N

Naim Audio 110

Naxos 5

O

Opus Arte 11

Outhere Music 74

P

Peter Christian 119

PJ Hi Fi 107

R

Raymond Wiel Swico 36

Royal Northern College of Music 50

S

Signum 92

Sony 27

W

Warner 92

North America

A

Allegro VIII

C

Como X

CS Bedford/Chrono Suisse XII

N

Naxos of America II

S

Sony BMG VI

PR Premier Retailer

MR Mail Order Retailer

A

Lacrymosa (Mozart), S50 No 2	71	Muhly	Oboe Concerto in B flat	59	Skalkottas	L'Atenaide – Cor mio, che prigion sei	83
Liebeslied (Schumann), S566	71	By All Means	Oboe Concerto in G	59	Duo	La costanza trionfante – Lascia almen che ti conseggi	83
Liebesträume, S541 No 3	70, 71	Motion	Overture in B flat	59	Škerjanc	Giustino – Sento in seno; Sorte, che m'invitasi...Ho nel petto un cor sì forte; Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Anastasio)	83
La lugubre gondola, S200	70	Seeing is Believing	Sonata in D	59	Autumn Song	Juditha triumphans – Agitata infido flatu; Transit actas	83
Mazeppa, S139 No 4	71	Step Team	Violin Concerto in C	59	Evening Impression	L'Olimpiade – Con questo ferro indegno; Gemo in punto e fremito; Sinfonia	83
Mephisto Waltz No 1, 'Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke'	70, 71	Mussorgsky	Violin Concerto in G	59	Mountain over Mountain Pass	Orlando furioso – Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Ruggiero); Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Medoro)	83
Nuages gris, S199	71	The Nursery	Reizenstein	102	Song	Semiramide – Con la face di Megera; Vincerà l'aspro mio fato	83
Piano Concerto No 1	71	N	Piano Sonata	102	Vision	Teuzzone – Ritornello (fragment of an aria for Zidiana)	83
Piano Sonata, S178	70, 71	Nied	Variations on the Lambeth Walk	103	White Clouds	Tietzeberg – La gloria del mio sangue; L'innocenza sfortunata	83
Ständchen (Schubert), S560	71	Zugabe	Wind Quintet	102	Smetana	W	
Valse impromptu, S213	71	Nyman	Respighi		The Bartered Bride – Overture	Wagner	
Valse oubliée, S215 No 1	71	Facing Goya	Aria	60	Strauss, R	Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg	85
M		Nystedt	Concerto for Violin	60	Intermezzo	Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg – Prelude, Act 3; Dance of the Apprentices; Procession of the Mastersingers	86
MacDowell		Behold the beautiful light of the sun	Rossiniana	60	Mädchenblumen, Op 22	Siegfried Idyll	90
Romanze, Op 35	67	The Bridal March of Myllargutens	Suite	60	Stravinsky	To the Evening Star	67
MacMillan		O	Rossini		The Rite of Spring	Die Walküre	85
...here in hiding...	75	O'Regan	La cambiale di matrimonio	82	T	Walton	
Give me justice	75	Beloved, all things ceased	Il barbiere di Siviglia	85	Tchaikovsky	Henry V – Two Pieces for Strings	54
Jubilate Deo	75	fleeing, God	Rota		The Queen of Spades	Violin Concerto	54
The Lamb has come for us from the House of David	75	O vera digna hostia	Symphony No 3	102	Symphony No 6, 'Pathétique'	Weber	
Magnificat and Nunc dimittis	75	Orr, CW	Cello Concerto	60	Violin Concerto	Freischütz	90
On Love	75	Bahnhofstrasse	Notturmo ungherese, Op 28	60	Tlessen	Konzertstück, Op 79	90
Serenity	75	P	Variations on a Hungarian Peasant Song, Op 4	60	Hamlet-Suite	Oberon – Overture	87
Le tombeau de Georges Rouault	75	Pavčić	The Vintner's Daughter, Op 23a	60	Salambo-Suite	Symphony No 2	90
Tremunt videntes angeli	75	Grandpa Single-Leg	S		Symphony No 2	Weinberg	
Mahler		Lullaby No 2	Saint-Saëns		Traditional	Piano Quintet, Op 18	66
Symphony No 3	93	Peñalosa	Allegro appassionato, Op 43	67	At the mid hour of night (arr Britten)	Williams, R	
Symphony No 9	89	Ave vera caro Christi	Carnaval des animaux – Le cygne	67	Avenging and Bright (arr Britten)	Let nothing trouble you	78
Martín		In passione positus Iesus	Piano Concerto No 4	60	Bid adieu (arr Pendleton)	O Adonai	78
Cello Concerto No 1	56	Memorare piissima	Symphony No 3, 'Organ'	60, 90	Give me your hand/So he gave	O Guiding Night	78
Three Madrigals	67	Missa Nunc fue pena mayor	Scelsi		Gjendines Lullaby (arr L Eriksson)	Collections	
Mašek		O bone Iesu	Manto	67	Gropen (arr Larsen)	Ensemble La Fenice – 'Un Camino de Santiago'	78
Under the Window	78	Sacris solenniis	Schmitt		I lay down so late (arr Alnæs)	Bernarda Fink; Marcos Fink; Anthony Spiri – 'Slovenija'	78
Mathieu		Transeunte Domino	Le palais hanté, Op 49	60	Jesus to savour your sweet union (arr Nystedt)	Alban Gerhardt; Cecile Licad – 'Casals Encores'	67
Piano Quintet	64	Tribularer	Psaume XLVII, Op 38	60	The Last Rose of Summer (arr Britten)	Glenn Gould – 'In Concert 1951-1960'	90
Piano Trio	64	Pergolesi	La tragédie de Salomé, Op 50	60	The Lost Lover (arr Moeran)	Václav Hudeček – 'The Greatest Romantic Violin Concertos'	61
Mendelssohn		L'Olimpiade	Schoeck		Marry Me Now (arr Hughes)	Martina Janková; Gérard Wyss – 'Voyage'	79
Elijah	75	Popper	Auf ein kind, Op 20 No 1	79	Merciful Jesus – Jesus guide my thoughts	Norwegian Soloists' Choir – 'White Night'	79
Symphony No 2, 'Lobgesang'	75	Chanson villageoise, Op 62 No 2	Dämmerung senkte sich von oben, Op 19a No 2	79	The Minstrel Boy (arr Britten)	Oslo Chamber Choir – 'Strid'	79
Violin Concerto	61	Vito	Ich habe mich dem Heil entschworen, Op 33 No 8	79	My heart always dwells/Cherubic Hymn (arr Tchaikovsky)	Willem van Otterloo – 'The Original Recordings 1951-1966'	90
Menotti		Poulenc	Schoenberg		Oh Men from the Fields (arr Hughes)	Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra – 'Nobel Prize Concert 2010'	89
Amahl and the Night Visitors	102	Les biches	The Book of Hanging Gardens	90	O, the deep, deep love of Jesus (arr Bruckner)	The Sixteen – 'O Guiding Night'	78
Violin Concerto	102	Prelovec	Piano Concerto	90	The Roving Dingle Boy (arr Moeran)	Ailish Tynan; Iain Burnside – 'An Irish Songbook'	77
Meyerbeer		Autumn Night	Verklärte Nacht	55	Sail on, sail on (arr Britten)	Thomas Zehetmair; Ruth Killius – 'Manto and Madrigals'	67
Coronation March	90	Prokofiev	Schubert		Sir Ole/Withered, fallen (arr Grieg)		
Modena		The Love for Three Oranges – March	Piano Trio No 2	66	V		
Tiento XIX	76	Puccini	Rosamunde – Overture	90	Vangberg		
Monk		La bohème	Symphony No 5	90	God grant us to live here		
Songs of Ascension	76	Tosca	Schumann		Simon Boccanegra		
Mozart		R	Der Königssohn, Op 116	76	Vivaldi		
Alcandro, lo confesso...	81	Rachmaninov	Nachdied, Op 108	76	Andromeda liberata – Sovvente il sole		
Non so d'onde viene, K512	81	Piano Concerto No 1	Requiem, Op 148	76	They are only looking/The young girl		
Così dunque tradisci...Aspri rimorsi atroci, K432/421a	81	Piano Concerto No 2	Symphony No 3, 'Rhenish'	57	The Tinker's Daughter (arr Moeran)		
Così fan tutte – Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo; Donne mie, le fate a tanti	81	Piano Concerto No 4	Schwarz-Schilling		Wedding March from Valsøfjord/ Aure (arr Sommero and Pedersen)		
Don Giovanni – Madamina, il catalogo è questo; Deh, vieni alla finestra; Fin ch'han dal vino	81	Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op 43	Scriabin		When my eye, tired by toil		
Mentre ti lascio, o figlia, K513	81	Ravel	Etude, Op 42 No 5	69	With Jesus I will journey (arr Sommero)		
Le nozze di Figaro	85	Ma Mère l'Oye – Suite	Fantasia, Op 28	69	V		
Le nozze di Figaro – Bravo, signor padrone!...Se vuol ballare; Ehi, sor paggio!...Non più andrai; Tutto è disposto...Aprite un po' quegli occhi; Hai già vinta la causa!...	81	Rapsodie espagnole	Impromptu, Op 12	69	Verdi		
Vedrò mentr'io sospiro	81	Reger	Nocturne for the left hand only, Op 9 No 2	69	Simon Boccanegra		
Per questa bella mano, K612	81	Aria, Op 103a No 3	Sonata-Fantasia No 2, Op 19	69	Vivaldi		
Piano Concertos – cpte	58	Concerto for Violin, Op 101	Waltz, Op 38	69	Andromeda liberata – Sovvente il sole		
Piano Concerto No 24	90	Romances, Op 50	Sgambati		Arsilda, regina di Ponto – Io sento in questo seno; Del goder la bella spene; Cara gioia		
Rondos – K382; K386	58	Reich	Serenata napoletana, Op 24 No 2	67			
Sinfonia concertante, K364	86	The Desert Music	Shostakovich				
Violin Sonatas – Nos 28 & 32	62	Three Movements	String Quartet No 10	66			
		Reichenauer	Violin Concerto No 1	87			
		Bassoon Concertos – in C; in G	Sibelius				
		Cello Concerto in D minor	Symphony No 5	89			
		Double Concerto for Oboe and Bassoon in B flat	Violin Concerto	61			
		Flute Concerto in G					

My Music

The actor-musician **Murray Head** on his early rejection, and ultimate acceptance, of classical music in a showbiz upbringing

Both my parents were in show business and they each brought their own musical tastes into our household. I veered towards the records my father played, although Sibelius's Second was the only thing I actually liked. Rachmaninov just didn't click, and Stravinsky was too edgy for me. My mother, the actress Helen Shingler, played piano, and I had lessons from the age of five. But my piano teacher used to hit me with a ruler, which put me off for life. My mother bought my father, the late director Seafeld Head, a ladies' Spanish guitar, I assume so they could play together, but it never happened. The instrument stayed in a cupboard until my friend Ben convinced me that playing guitar had a good effect on girls. I learnt the same three chords he could play, but it didn't work at all. It turned out his success had nothing to do with the guitar – he was just good-looking.

I never thought about pursuing a career as a classical performer. I found the music fantastic to listen to but I felt that education at that time was about destroying the individual. I'd been brought up in such a critical environment that I would have caved in under the pressure. And I'd already had a brutal time at school. At four, I was sent to the Lycée Français in London and I couldn't cope with the fact that there was no leaning towards English at all. It was all too much, so I managed to conjure up a psychosomatic disease, asthma, and got pulled out. I was home-schooled for two years, then went to various other schools, ending up in Hampton, west London, where I was thrown out of the choir for extemporising.

But something strange was happening in England at that



'A girl invited me out to Tangiers and it was there I was introduced to Wagner'

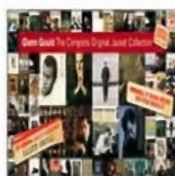
time – the post-war babies were maturing and breaking loose. Blues started to hit the English public and I was swept along. I played guitar and sang in a band at 14, although never learnt how to notate music. I used to get it written down by others, and then the software came out which did it for me. I'm not proud of that, it's just how it happened. But

there were still encounters with classical music. A girl I knew invited me out to her mother's house in Tangiers. There I was introduced to Wagner's overtures, all conducted by Beecham. He really knew how to drag things out – it was magnificent. The next milestone was in 1968 when I was working in the theatre and someone played

me the Fauré Requiem with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau on EMI. I had never liked opera but this was a go-between and I found it extraordinary. After that, I worked with a pianist, Peter Robinson, on *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and he introduced me to music by Ligeti, Penderecki and Cornelius Cardew. And later on, when I was doing a European tour with the guys from *Chess*, I discovered the Concertgebouw, by far the best concert hall I've ever sung in.

A real turning-point was when I wrote the film script for *Les enfants du siècle*, based on George Sand and her affair with author Alfred de Musset. I researched the music these people were listening to at the time and put together a score that included Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*, which they would have heard together at La Fenice, Liszt's Second Piano Concerto, music by Clara and Robert Schumann, Tárrega's Harp Concerto...I was very proud of myself, but it became obvious that the people working on the film didn't want me to be involved, and the score was handed over to someone else.

After the film, I took the liberty of writing lyrics to a Schumann sonata – the result was "This Face" and I think I did it justice. But my most intense classical music experience was "Sorry, I love you". Simon Jeffes, the leader of the Penguin Café Orchestra, wrote it for me. I asked him for a Penderecki opening and he gave it to me. We recorded it in St Mary's, Paddington, with nine string players. They were taking the tempi from me, feeding off me...It was wonderful. ☺
For details of Murray Head's forthcoming autobiography and next album, visit www.murrayhead.net



THE MUSIC I COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT...

Wagner Siegfried Idyll for 13 instruments
Toronto Symphony Orchestra / Glenn Gould
Sony 88697 13094-2

This isn't what you would normally associate with Glenn Gould but it's simply stunning.



CADOGAN HALL

Zurich International Concert Series 2011-12

FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER 2011

Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra

Yuri Simonov CONDUCTOR; Nikita Boriso-Glebky VIOLIN

Prokofiev ROMEO & JULIET (SUITE)

Tchaikovsky VIOLIN CONCERTO

Mussorgsky (ARR. RAVEL) PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2011

Czech National Symphony Orchestra

Libor Pešek CONDUCTOR; Nicola Benedetti VIOLIN

Schubert SYMPHONY NO. 8, 'UNFINISHED'

Mozart VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 5

Dvořák SYMPHONY NO. 8

MONDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2011

Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra

Antoni Wit CONDUCTOR; Kuba Jakowicz VIOLIN

Moniuszko OVERTURE FROM OPERA PARIA

Panufnik SINFONIA RUSTICA

Bruch VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 1

Beethoven SYMPHONY NO. 5

FRIDAY 27 JANUARY 2012

Lahti Symphony Orchestra

Okko Kamu CONDUCTOR; Elina Vähälä VIOLIN

Sibelius KARELIA SUITE; VIOLIN CONCERTO; SYMPHONY NO. 5

TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2012

Russian State Philharmonic Orchestra

Valery Poliansky CONDUCTOR; Tatyana Polianskaya PIANO

Tchaikovsky POLONAISE FROM EUGENE ONEGIN

Rachmaninov PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2

Rimsky-Korsakov SCHEHERAZADE

MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2012

Camerata Salzburg

Tomas Hanus CONDUCTOR; Hilary Hahn VIOLIN

Mozart DIVERTIMENTO, K.138; VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 4;

ADAGIO FOR VIOLIN & ORCHESTRA, K.261; SYMPHONY NO. 29

MONDAY 2 APRIL 2012

Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra

Michel Tabachnik CONDUCTOR; Sasha Sitkovetsky VIOLIN

Brahms TRAGIC OVERTURE

Mendelssohn VIOLIN CONCERTO

Tchaikovsky SYMPHONY NO. 6, 'PATHÉTIQUE'

FRIDAY 25 MAY 2012

Berlin Symphony Orchestra

Mario Venzago CONDUCTOR; Kit Armstrong PIANO

Weber OVERTURE TO DER FREISCHÜTZ

Schumann PIANO CONCERTO

Beethoven SYMPHONY NO. 3, 'EROICA'

BOX OFFICE: 020 7730 4500

BOOK ONLINE: www.cadoganhall.com/zics

Series discounts available

Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ



How many CDs do you own but never play?



Store, browse and listen to your complete CD collection on the revolutionary Brennan

What's the point in owning hundreds of CDs worth thousands of pounds if you never listen to them? The problem with CDs is that it's quicker to make a cup of coffee than dip into a CD. Try timing how long it takes to pick a CD, load it in the CD player, play a snippet from a track or two, eject it and put it back where it came from. Then there is the problem of finding music. The print on a CD spine is tiny. What if the track is on a compilation CD? What if the CD is in the car? Then there is the clutter. You need to keep your CDs near the player or you won't play them. So you are forced to share your living space with literally hundreds of cheap plastic boxes.

CDs are a great way to listen to music but they are also inconvenient, inaccessible and a bit of a chore.

The Brennan JB7 is a CD player with a hard disk that stores up to 5,000 CDs - and that's not all

It saves space and clutter and delivers near immediate access to an entire music collection. JB7 owners rediscover then fall in love with their music again simply because the Brennan makes it so accessible.

The Brennan also records from vinyl and cassette so you can enjoy your entire music collection but keep the originals in another room or retire them to the attic.

Small enough to pick up with one hand yet big enough for a lifetime of music, the Brennan JB7 is one man's brilliant idea for everyone's forgotten music. It's only available direct from Brennan at www.brennan.co.uk.

The face behind Brennan

Martin Brennan, who designed the JB7, has worked with Sir Clive Sinclair and Sir Alan Sugar and has designed over 20 silicon chips in his career. He was a real pioneer in the computer games industry - he played a central role in the design of the worlds first 64 bit games computer.

Ever since CDs were invented Martin wanted a CD player that would hold his entire CD collection. He wanted something as simple to use as a light switch but at the same time something that would let him find a particular track without leaving the armchair.

Key features

- ▶ Browse albums by spinning the volume knob - push to play
- ▶ Display track names as they play
- ▶ Delete tracks you don't like
- ▶ Seven rainbow colour coded playlists
- ▶ Segue function blends one track into the next
- ▶ One touch record from vinyl, cassette or radio
- ▶ One button plays the entire music collection at random
- ▶ Plays MP3 downloads - future proof
- ▶ Clock with alarm
- ▶ 60 Watt, 4.8 x 16 x 22 cm steel and aluminium construction
- ▶ Backup music to external USB hard disk for safe keeping
- ▶ You can use it with your existing hi-fi or on its own



*"I've suddenly re-discovered my love of music - it's amazing"
"I feel like a teenager all over again - thank you Brennan"*

The Brennan JB7 is available in Cobalt Blue or Titanium Metallic



FULL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

If you're not suitably impressed with your Brennan JB7 we'll collect it free of charge and refund you in full.

A word about copyright

"In 2006 the record companies said unequivocally that they are happy for you to load your own CDs onto a hard disk but the Advertising Standards Authority have asked us to tell you that it is unlawful to copy material without the permission of the copyright holder. Confused? Find out more and have your say at www.brennan.co.uk"



Martin Brennan

ONLY AVAILABLE DIRECT. To order visit www.brennan.co.uk

brennan